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THE BICKNELLS.

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Second Family Reunion,  
SEPT., 1882.

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1635.  1882.

# The Bicknell Family Association,

FOUNDED AT BOSTON, 1879.

## OFFICERS ELECTED, OCT., 1882.

<i>President,</i>	
THOMAS W. BICKNELL,	Boston, Mass.
<i>Vice - Presidents,</i>	
William Bicknell,	Buckfield, Me.
Rev. D. H. Bicknell,	Underhill, Vt.
Rev. James Bicknell,	Stanwix, N. Y.
Charles P. Bicknell,	Philadelphia, Penn.
George A. Bicknell,	New Albany, Ind.
Henry G. Bicknell,	Chicago, Ill.
Dr. Charles H. Bicknell,	Beloit, Wis.
Anson D. Bicknell,	Humboldt, Iowa.
Charles F. Bicknell,	Carson City, Nevada
David Bicknell,	East Orange, N. J.
A. J. Bicknell,	New York, N. Y.
Charles T. Bicknell,	Massillon, Ohio.
Mrs. Emma V. P. Love,	Fredericton, N. B.
George R. Bicknell,	St. Louis, Mo.
Lemuel Hayford,	Austin, Texas.
Henry A. Bicknell,	Big Oak Flat, Cal.
Luke H. Bicknell,	Gallatin, Texas.
Mrs. Ella C. Morrison,	Mineapolis, Minn.
Zeb. Mead,	Parkersburg, W. Va.
Mrs. Sarah Grant,	Mansfield, Conn.
William P. Watson,	Washington, D. C.
Byron H. Bicknell,	Kearney, Neb.
Otis P. Bicknell,	Brookville, Kas.
Chester C. Bicknell,	Cedar Springs, Mich.
Joseph G. Bicknell,	Cambridgeport, Mass.
<i>Corresponding Secretary,</i>	
ALFRED BICKNELL,	Boston, Mass.
<i>Recording Secretary,</i>	
Miss MAUDE M. BICKNELL,	Melrose, Mass.
<i>Treasurer,</i>	
ROBERT T. BICKNELL,	E. Weymouth, Mass
<i>Historian,</i>	
QUINCY BICKNELL,	Hingham, Mass.
<i>Executive Committee,</i>	
The President,	The Treasurer,
The Secretaries,	The Historian, and
William E. Bicknell,	Boston.
Zechariah L. Bicknell,	E. Weymouth.
Rev. Geo. W. Bicknell,	Lowell.
Mrs. Clara Bicknell Walker,	Lynn.
Ellery B. Crane,	Worcester.
Geo. F. Bicknell,	Attleboro.
Francis A. Bicknell,	North Weymouth.



# The Bicknells.

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PROCEEDINGS AND ADDRESSES

AT THE

## Second Family Reunion,

AT WEYMOUTH, MASS.,

September 20 and 21, 1882.

WITH

Addresses and Exercises

AT THE

## DEDICATION

OF THE

## BICKNELL FAMILY MONUMENT.

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*BY THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE,  
FOR THE FAMILY.*

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BOSTON:

NEW ENGLAND PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1883.



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# THE BICKNELL REUNIONS.

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## THE MEETINGS OF 1880 AND '82.

The Bicknell Family Association was formed in 1879, for the purpose of uniting the members of a scattered family, of cultivating more perfect social relations, of gathering the facts of personal and family history, and of holding gatherings of the Bicknells from time to time, to adopt and carry out measures of general interest in the development of a true family spirit, and for the proper recognition of our regard for an honorable ancestry. In furtherance of these purposes, several meetings, annual and special, have been held in Boston and vicinity, which have been helpful in enlarging acquaintanceships among brethren, and in fostering a deeper spirit of affection for the family name and record. The Reunion, at Weymouth in 1880, was an occasion of great interest to our large fraternity of Bicknells, by name, blood, or marriage; and one of the outcomes of that meeting was the proposal to hold another at a later date, to commemorate the work of our ancestors, Zachary, Agnes, and John, by the erection of a suitable monument in the old cemetery on Burial Hill. The feeling of the company there gathered was expressed in a sentence in the Proceedings of that Reunion, as follows:

“One thought lingered with us as we separated with hearty hand-shakings and warm fraternal feelings from this first Family Reunion,—that perhaps on the two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary (1885) of our American life as Bicknells, a thousand of our name and descent might gather on that consecrated spot to erect a substantial monument in memory of Zachary and Agnes Bicknell, 1635.”

The wish and the prophecy took possession of some of our brethren with such fervor, that it seemed too long to defer so worthy an act till 1885; and, at the annual meeting, December, 1881, a committee was chosen, after discussion of the subject, to consider and act on a proposition to raise the money at once for a monument, and if it seemed

wise, to hold a second Reunion in 1882. After mature deliberation, the following circular was prepared and sent out to the members of the family throughout the country :

### BICKNELL FAMILY ASSOCIATION,

BOSTON, MASS., Jan. 2, 1882.

*To all of our Name or Descent to whom this may come :*

Our common ancestors, ZACHARY and AGNES BICKNELL, emigrated from England in 1635. They landed in what is now WEYMOUTH, MASS. There they planted their home; there they died and were buried; and this old town has been, to this day, the continuous home of some of the family, a large and honorable descent still living there, while hundreds and thousands of others,—all alike descendants of *John*, the only son of Zachary and Agnes,—are scattered throughout the country.

The Bicknell "Burying Place" in Weymouth is well identified, but there are no stones to mark the exact spot where repose the earthly remains of our ancestors. It is a mark of intelligent loyalty to one's family to honor the memory of a *good* ancestry by such acts as testify a proper regard for their virtues and sacrifices. It has been with great satisfaction, therefore, that we have noted, since the formation of our Association, the repeated suggestion that, as a family, we ought to take measures to erect a suitable monument to their memory in the old cemetery in Weymouth. At our Family Gathering last summer, the subject was discussed, and all expressed their approval of the movement. That being simply a *social* gathering, no action was taken; but, at the Annual Meeting of the Association held in this city on the 9th of December, it was formally voted to place the matter in the hands of the Executive Committee, with instructions to appeal to the members of our family, wherever scattered, to contribute funds for that purpose. In accordance therewith, we appeal to you for such sum as your means will justify. The entire cost of the structure is estimated to be about \$500. It is designed to erect a simple granite or marble monument, plain and substantial, as befits the character of the family whose name it will bear. The inscriptions upon its sides will state the important facts of their history, and that a numerous and grateful posterity thus unite to do honor to their memory. In the base of the structure we propose to insert a suitable receptacle, containing the names of the subscribers and such documents as pertain to the history of this large family.

We propose to collect the necessary funds at once, and have the monument completed in season to be dedicated at our Second Family Gathering, which we propose to hold at Weymouth, in September, 1882. The sum needed of each one is but trifling; but we wish to make it essentially a *family* affair, and therefore hope to receive *something* from every one of the family who shall be informed of the enterprise. No part of the amount received will be expended until funds sufficient to insure its erection shall have been received by our Treasurer. Inclosed we send a blank slip, which please fill up and forward, with your contribution, at the earliest practicable

moment. The receipt of our Treasurer for the same will be returned at once. So soon as the responses amount to the required sum, we shall send to each subscriber a detailed statement of our labors. As you may know members of our family whose names are unknown to us, we desire that for this purpose you will consider yourself a special agent to promote this laudable object; and to this end we inclose extra slips for distribution. Remembering that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," we are sure that, in the time to come, the recollections of our connection with this work will be those of pride in our honored and honorable *name*, of pleasure in our acts contributing to its perpetuity, and of gratitude to the COMMON FATHER of all mankind for enabling us to assist in this beneficent undertaking.

We shall be pleased to hear from any of our family friends by letter, and will thank you for suggestions in regard to this or any other work of our Association. Especially we desire the names and residences of all those of our family still unknown to us. For more than two hundred years, the children of this numerous family have been scattered up and down this broad land, mostly strangers to each other and to their ancestry. Let us now, at least, contribute the name we bear to complete the record begun by our Great Grandsire so many years ago.

Fraternally yours,

THOMAS W. BICKNELL,	BOSTON,	<i>President,</i>	} <i>Executive Committee.</i>
ROBERT T. BICKNELL,	"	<i>Treasurer,</i>	
ALFRED BICKNELL,	"	<i>Cor. Secretary,</i>	
QUINCY BICKNELL,	W. HINGHAM,	<i>Historian,</i>	
Z. L. BICKNELL,		E. WEYMOUTH,	
MRS. CLARA BICKNELL WALKER,	LYNN,		
REV. GEO. W. BICKNELL,		LOWELL,	
ELLERY B. CRANE,		WORCESTER,	
WM. E. BICKNELL,		BOSTON,	
GEO. F. BICKNELL,		ATTLEBORO,	
FRANCIS A. BICKNELL,		NO. WEYMOUTH,	

As was confidently expected, responses were promptly and generously made to the call for contributions, varying from fifty cents to thirty dollars; and, in a short time, the Committee, assured of raising the necessary funds, secured estimates for a suitable monument, and finally made a contract with The Cutter Marble Company of Vermont to construct a monument of Excelsior marble, and to erect it at Burial Hill, North Weymouth.

## THE REUNION OF 1882.

Wednesday and Thursday, September 20 and 21, 1882, were selected as the days for the Reunion; and invitations were extended to the family, far and near, to attend the interesting services. For an impartial account of the exercises of the two days, we quote from *The Weymouth Gazette* of September 22:

The pleasant and interesting exercises of the Second Reunion of the Bicknell Family Association, in the Methodist Church, East Weymouth, and the large attendance of the kindred who bear this time-honored name, or represent the Bicknell blood under other titles, gave cheering evidence to the general interest of the family in all that pertains to keeping alive the memories of their ancestors and perpetuating their virtues. The morning opened bright and clear, and at eleven o'clock the church was well filled with the assembled members of the family. Through the efforts of the committee of arrangements, Zachary L. Bicknell, Esq. (the eighth of the name), being the chairman, the various details of preparation were early consummated, and at half-past eleven the President of the Association, Thomas W. Bicknell, LL.D., of Boston, with the chaplain of the day, Rev. E. A. Wyman, of Malden, and Quincy Bicknell, Esq., of Hingham, Historian of the Association, took seats upon the platform, which was decorated with flowers. The exercises were commenced with an organ voluntary by Mr. Arthur M. Raymond, the selection being the "Triumphal March," by Dudley Buck. The choir, comprising a double quartette,—sopranos, Mrs. G. A. Hunt, Miss Abbie P. Pratt; altos, Mrs. Thomas Burgoyne, Mrs. James D. Sherman; tenors, Messrs. W. H. Pratt, D. P. Lincoln; bass, Messrs. John P. Burrell, J. Q. N. Bicknell,—gave the "Te Deum Laudamus" with fine effect, and the chaplain then read a part of the twelfth chapter of Romans as consonant to the occasion, in its presentation of a creed to which all could subscribe, and in its bearing upon the character of the family representatives and the prevalent good feeling among them manifested by their presence at this pleasant gathering. He then made request that the assembly repeat in concert the twenty-third Psalm, after which he offered a fervent prayer, to which the organ and choir responded with the air, "O sing ye Jehovah's praises."

In the order of exercises, Rev. Geo. W. Bicknell, of Lowell, was announced to deliver an address of welcome, but owing to sudden indisposition he was unable to be present, and the President introduced Z. L. Bicknell, Esq., in his place, who congratulated the au-



dience on the fact that while it had been intimated to him that the expected speaker was intending to occupy an hour, he should not detain them more than five minutes. This brief period was well filled in extending to the family gathered here a warm greeting.

An anthem, "Mighty Jehovah," was then sung by the choir, the solo being rendered in good style by Mr. Pratt.

Thomas W. Bicknell, LL.D., the orator of the day, gave a carefully prepared address, abounding in historical information relative to the early settlers both in their native land and in their adopted country, the locality of their supposed residence in England being indicated on a topographical map prepared for the occasion by the speaker. The advent of a thunder-storm, and the approach of the hour announced for dinner, were reasons sufficient to induce the speaker to defer a portion of the address to a later hour.

An original hymn, written by Alfred Bicknell, Esq, was sung by the choir and audience :

#### HYMN.

O Thou, of all the race the Sire,  
Whose hand has set the stars of heaven :  
Thyself their all-sustaining fire ;  
Thy bounty every good has given.

We praise Thee that in days of old  
Our fathers to these shores were brought,  
For all Thy blessings, manifold,  
For all Thy words with Wisdom fraught,—

For power to serve Thee, by our deeds  
Of mercy unto others shown ;  
For thankful hearts that all our needs  
Turn for relief to Thee alone ;—

For these our grateful songs we give ;  
To Thee our fervent prayers ascend :  
In Thy blest favor may we live,  
Thy laws obey, Thy courts attend.

In this, our " Pilgrim Fathers' " home,  
Once more our band fraternal meet ;  
To this our " Mecca " do we come  
With happy hearts and willing feet.

And when at last these scenes of cheer  
To us here gathered cease to be,  
May we in Heaven's celestial sphere  
Find our united family.

Quincy Bicknell, Esq., then made brief allusion to Capt. Stephen Bicknell and Lovell Bicknell, Esq., deceased, whose portraits had been placed on each side of the desk ; and after the benediction had been pronounced by the Chaplain, the company repaired to the vestry, where Mr. Harvey Blount, of Boston, caterer for the occasion, had provided a tempting display of creature-comforts, the *menu* embracing roast turkey, chicken, cold meats, cake and pastry rolls, fruit, ice-cream and water-ices, coffee and tea, to which the guests devoted special attention for an half-hour, after grace by Rev. Mr. Mundy. Among the invited guests seated at the table on the platform were Rev. Messrs. Mundy, Chapin, and Leavitt, with their ladies.

The feasting being ended, the president called the assembly to order for the intellectual treat, and introduced the toast-master, Alfred Bicknell, Esq., who made brief remarks, and invited Rev. Mr. Mundy to speak, who wittily and gracefully responded. Rev. Messrs. Wyman, Chapin, and Leavitt ; Amos J. Bicknell, Esq., of New York ; Z. I. Bicknell, Esq., and Edward Bicknell, Esq., were also called upon by the toastmaster, and their responses were well adapted to the occasion.

Letters were read from Rev. Dennis H. Bicknell, of Sheldon, Vt.; Mrs. Ames, of Pennsylvania ; Gov. Long, of Massachusetts ; and Gov. Littlefield, of Rhode Island ; Hon. Marshall P. Wilder, Hon. Chas. F. Adams, Jr., Hon. R. R. Bishop ; A. Sidney Bicknell, of London ; Hon. Geo. A. Bicknell, of Indiana ; Madame De Larmoyer, of Brussels, (*née* Bicknell) ; Hon. Chas. Q. Tirrell, of Natick ; Geo. F. Bicknell, Esq., of Attleboro ; all of whom expressed their regrets that they were unable to be present. The president said that Mr. Albion H. Bicknell, of Malden, the artist, who was also unable to be present, had sent a note in which he tendered a liberal subscription for the monument.

A poem, written by Mr. Stephen A. Bicknell, was then read, and at the conclusion of the exercises the president requested all members of the family present to record their names in an album prepared for the purpose, and also requested photographs for the album.

Among the family treasures exhibited in the church were the baptismal robe, made of brocade silk, elegantly figured, used at the christening of an ancestor of the president in 1724 ; a "Breeches Bible," owned by Mr. Joseph Bicknell, and printed in 1613,—the volume having been brought from England, probably by the founder of the family here.

The services were closed about four o'clock, and after announcement had been made that friends from abroad would be entertained for the night at the homes of residents, the assembly dispersed to meet again in the vestry at 8.30 o'clock, for a social gathering and entertainment.

## THE EVENING EXERCISES.

The audience again assembled in the vestry of the M. E. Church, at 7.30 o'clock, for social converse and entertainment. The exercises opened with a piano solo by Mr. Arthur Raymond, which received merited applause.

The president introduced the exercises with a brief address on the social side of family life, and the advantages flowing from these reunions.

Z. L. Bicknell, Esq., remarked that there was evidence that, at some time, some member of the Bicknell family had been a slaveholder, from the fact that a colored man named Freeborn Bicknell, now residing in New York, was the son of a slave once owned by one of the Bicknells, and had sent his contribution to the funds of the Association.

Mr. Quincy Bicknell, of Hingham, in verification of this fact, read a deed of sale of a slave given by Joshua Bicknell, dated Nov. 25, 1782.

Mr. Quincy Bicknell, also paid an eloquent tribute to the late Ezra Bicknell, who died in June last.

Mrs. Mary Hunt then gave an excellent vocal selection, which was finely rendered and duly appreciated. This was followed by remarks by Mr. Stephen Bicknell, of North Weymouth; D. A. Waldron, Esq., of Providence, R. I.; C. H. Pratt, Esq., of East Weymouth, and others, all in a humorous vein, but brief and interesting.

Rev. E. A. Wyman, of Malden, then presented the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Association are heartily extended to the people of Weymouth for their kindly and generous hospitality; to the choir and other musical talent for their excellent music; to the ladies for their beautiful contributions of flowers; and to the trustees of the M. E. Church for opening their place of worship for our occupation.

Mr. Stephen Bicknell then sang "The Irish Jaunting Car"; Mrs. Hunt again favored the company with a finely-executed selection; the audience joined in singing the "Doxology," and the interesting exercises of the day were ended.

## DEDICATION OF THE MONUMENT.

Owing to the rainstorm which prevailed Thursday morning, the representatives of the family were obliged to forego the assemblage at the burial ground, and the remaining exercises took place in the Old North Church, commencing at eleven o'clock. Prayer was offered by Rev. E. A. Wyman, chaplain of the Association; "Coronation" was sung by the congregation; Rev. F. P. Chapin followed with appropriate remarks, taking for their foundation Genesis xviii.: 7; the congregation then sang the hymn "Blest be the tie that binds," and Edward Bicknell, Esq., of Boston, gave the dedicatory address.

A hymn, written for the occasion by Wm. Bicknell, Esq., of Hartford, Me. (who is now in the seventy-ninth year of his age, and is the oldest living member of the Nathaniel Bicknell branch of the Zachary tree), was read as follows:

## HYMN.

Great God above, The Fount of Love!  
On us, who meet this day  
At Weymouth town, of old renown,  
Send down Thy grace, we pray.

We come as one, both old and young,  
To show our wise intent;  
With history right, to bring to light  
This sacred monument;—

To show there came across the main,  
Zachary, Agnes, and John;  
In hours of need, to sow the seed  
From which the Bicknells sprung.

This race is found in many a town,  
Where the blood of Zachary's seen;  
To live or die for liberty,  
And shun all acts that's mean.

May they increase, in paths of peace,  
So they may understand,  
With works of love, like Thee above,  
To live and bless our land.

Lord, keep from harm, in storm and calm,  
This shaft to us so dear;  
With Gospel Light, in visions bright,  
We'll meet from year to year;

And gather round this hallowed ground,  
 Where we do dedicate  
 The Bicknell name, worthy the fame  
 Of Massachusetts State.

Great God of all, both great and small,  
 We pray that Thou wilt ever  
 Give us a home beyond the tomb,  
 To dwell with Thee forever.

After brief congratulatory remarks by Quincy Bicknell, Alfred Bicknell, A. J. Bicknell, and others, the company repaired to the cemetery where the monument was unveiled, but on account of a heavy shower the prayer of dedication and other exercises were omitted, and the ladies and gentlemen hastily returned to the church, where a collation was served by caterer Blount. After a dedicatory prayer by Rev. Mr. Chapin, and brief addresses by several members of the family, the company united in singing the Doxology in "Old Hundred," and then separated with profound gratitude for the pleasures of the meeting, and a wish for many other happy assemblies of Bicknells.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT.

The monument is of Excelsior marble, eleven feet and three inches high. It has three bases, die and cap, surmounted by a bowl-shaped, fluted urn. The lower base is three feet and four inches square; the second base, two feet ten inches square; and the third base, two feet six inches square. The die is two feet square by three feet two inches high, above which, and beneath the cap, is an ornamented plinth one foot nine inches square and seven inches thick. The cap is ornamentally carved, surmounted by an urn three feet two inches high, and one foot three inches across the bowl. Each part is in harmonious proportions, polished fully. There is an inscription on each face of the die in raised letters, with polished face. The whole is made of the best quality monumental marble of the Cutter Marble Co. of Middlebury, Vt., and had been wrought under the best workmanship of that company. The whole weight of the monument is not far from five tons.

*Inscriptions.—On the front.*—In memory and in honor of Zachary and Agnes Bicknell. This monument is erected by a grateful posterity, September, 1882.

*On the West side.*—In memory of John, son of Zachary and Agnes, and his sons, John, Zachary and Thomas; founders of the family in America.

*On the North side.*—Zachary Bicknell died in Weymouth, A. D. 1636, aged 45 years.

*On the East side.*—Zachary Bicknell, his wife Agnes, their son John, and servant John Kitchen, left Weymouth, England, in Rev. Joseph Hull's company, settling near this spot, July, 1635.

Within a copper box, hermetically sealed and placed in the bottom of the second base of the monument, are the following papers and documents :

1. Boston papers of Sept. 19, 1882 : the *Advertiser, Herald, Journal, Traveller*, and *Transcript*.
2. The names of donors to the monument.
3. Circulars relating to the Reunions of 1880 and 1882.
4. *The Bicknells, and the Family Reunion of 1880* ; one copy, cloth.
5. *The Bicknells ; A Memorial of Joshua Bicknell's Genealogy* ; one copy, cloth.
6. *Historical Sketches of Barrington, R. I.*, by T. W. Bicknell.
7. Business-cards of members of family, and various publications by the Bicknells.



# AN HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

---

BY THOS. W. BICKNELL, LL.D.,

PRESIDENT OF THE BICKNELL FAMILY ASSOCIATION.

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## *Brethren of a Common Ancestry, of the Bicknell Name and Descent :*

We meet, some of us for the first time, others after the separation of two years, since our first reunion, to speak of the virtues of our sires, and to review the path in which our God and their's *led them* that we might possess so goodly a heritage. It is good for us of the seventh, eighth, ninth, and even the tenth generations from Zachary and Agnes, to gather once again around the ancestral hearth-stone, that we may keep alive thereon the fires of love for family and for race, devotion to principle, and allegiance to Heaven, which they kindled. Let us, for a time, live over, if we may, some of the days which are past in history, but present in living reality.

The unit of society is the individual. The unit of civilization is the family. Prior to Dec. 20, 1620, New England life had never seen a civilized family, or felt its influences. It is true that the Icelandic Chronicles tell us that Lief, the son of Eric the Red, 1001, sailed with a crew of thirty-five men in a Norwegian vessel, and driven southward in a storm, from Greenland along the coasts of Labrador, wintered in Vineland on the shores of Mount Hope Bay. Longfellow's "Skeleton in Armor" has revealed their temporary settlement. Thither sailed Eric's son, Thorstein, with his young and beautiful wife, Gudrida, and their twenty-five companions, the following year. His death occurred to put an end to the expedition, which Thorfinn took up with his marriage to the young widow, Gudrida, and with his bride and one hundred and sixty-five persons (five of them young married women) they spent three years on the shores of the Narragansett Bay, where Snorre, the first white child, was born,—the progenitor of the great Danish sculptor, Thorwaldsen. But this is tradition, not history. Later still, came other adventurers to seek fortunes in the New World, but they came as individuals,—young, adventurous men, with all to gain and nothing to lose,

and, if successful, to return with gold or fame as the reward of their sacrifice and daring.

Six hundred years pass, and a colony of one hundred and five men, not a woman in the company, sailed from England for America, and landed at Jamestown, Va. Within six months half of the immigrants had perished, and only for the courage and bravery of John Smith the whole would have met a sad fate. The first European women seen on the banks of the James was the wife of one of the seventy Virginia colonists who came later, and her maid, Anne Burroughs, who helped to give permanency and character to a fugitive settlement in a colony which waited two hundred and fifty years to learn the value of a New England home, and to appreciate the civilization which sprang up in a New England town, through the agency of a New England family.

An experience similar to that of the Virginia settlers,—disappointment, hardship, death,—attended the immigrants who, under George Popham, Raleigh, and Gilbert, attempted to make a permanent home on the coast of Maine, but their house was a log camp, with not a solitary woman to light its gloom or cheer its occupants. Failure, defeat, and death were the inevitable consequences. There was no family, and there could be no permanency of civilization.

The planting of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies was of another sort. Whole families embarked on board the *Mayflower*, the *Fortune*, the *Ann*, the *Mary* and *John*, and other ships that brought their precious freight in safety to a New World. Of the one hundred and one persons who came in the *Mayflower* in 1620, twenty-eight were females, and eighteen were wives and mothers. They did not leave their homes, in the truest sense,—they brought them with them. Their household goods and hearthstone gods were all snugly stowed beneath the decks of the historic ship, and the multitude of *Mayflower* relics, now held in precious regard in public and private collections, but testify to the immense inventory of that one little ship of almost fabulous carrying capacity. To the compact signed in Plymouth harbor, in 1620, John Carver signs eight persons, whom he represents; Edward Winslow, five; William Brewster, six; William Mullins, five; William White, five; Stephen Hopkins, Edward Fuller and John Turner, each, eight; John Chilton, three,—one of whom, his daughter Mary, in whom some of the Bicknells have to-day a family interest, was the first woman, as tradition says, to jump from the boat upon Plymouth Rock. In the Weymouth Company, under the leadership of Rev. Joseph Hull, who set sail from Old Weymouth, England, on the 20th of March, 1635, and landed at Wessagusset, —now Weymouth, Mass.,—there were one hundred and five persons, divided into twenty-one families. Among these were John Whitmarsh, his wife Alice, and four children; Robert



Lovell, husbandman, with his good wife Elizabeth and children, two of whom, Ellen and James, were year-old twins; Edward Poole and family; Henry Kingman, Thomas Holbrook, Richard Porter, and not least of all Zachary Bicknell, his wife Agnes, their son John, and servant John Kitchen.

Families these,—all on board,—households, treasures, all worldly estates, and best of all the rich sympathies and supports of united, trusting hearts, daring to face the perils of an ocean-passage of forty-six days duration, and the new, strange life in the wilds of America, that they might prove their faith in each other, in their principles, and in God. “He setteth the solitary in families,” says the Psalmist; and the truth was never better illustrated than in the isolated and weary life of our ancestry, two and one-half centuries ago.

To the Pilgrim and the Puritan, wife, children, house, home, family, church, were the most precious possessions. Nothing human could divorce ties which nature had so strongly woven. And whenever we think of our honored ancestry, it is not as individual adventurers; but we see good-man Zachary, good-wife Agnes, and their son John as the representatives of the great body of those who with them planted homes, families, society, civilization, in the Western World. They came together, or if alone, to pioneer the way for wife and children or sweet-heart by the next ship, and they came to stay, as witness the names of the old families of Plymouth, Weymouth, Salem, Boston, Dorchester, in the leading circles of wealth and social position in all of these old towns. “Behold,” says Dr. Bushnell, “the Mayflower, rounding now the southern cape of England, filled with husbands and wives and children; families of righteous men, under covenant with God and each other to lay some good foundation for religion, engaged both to make and keep their own laws, expecting to supply their own wants and bear their own burdens, assisted by none but the God in whom they trust! Here are the hands of industry! the germs of liberty! the dear pledges of order! and the sacred beginnings of a home!” Of such, only, could Mrs. Hemans’s inspired hymn have been written:

“There were men with hoary hair  
Amidst that pilgrim band;  
Why had they come to wither there,  
Away from their childhood’s land?

There was woman’s fearless eye,  
Lit by her deep love’s truth;  
There was manhood’s brow, serenely high,  
And the fiery heart of youth.”

It is our good fortune, as Bicknells, to be able to trace our descent from an *old New England family*, whose strength was inwrought into the framework of society nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, and whose lineage may be found in the upbuilding of every State on the broad continent. What interest it is for each individual to be related to men and women who, though they saw not the end from the beginning, belonged to the grand army of Faith and Hope, fighting valiantly the good fight, who builded wiser and better than they knew or dreamed, and, dying, bequeathed the inheritance of virtue, integrity, and nobility, equal to the best of their race.

The recorded facts concerning our ancestors, Zachary, Agnes, and John, are few, and we must read between the words as well as the lines to satisfy our desires for ancestral knowledge. They came with Rev. Joseph Hull and his party of one hundred and five men and women in 1635, sailing March 20 from Weymouth, County of Dorset, in England, and after a fair voyage of forty-six days entered Massachusetts Bay, and May 6, "cast anchor," as says the historian of Gen. Lovell, "before Gov. Winthrop's infant village of Boston." Here they wait until July 8, when the General Court pass the order that "There is leave graunted to 21 ffamilyes to sitt down at Wessaguscus; viz. . . . ." The two months between the arrival and the location by the Court have not been idly spent in swinging in hammocks on deck by day, or by "Pinafore" performances in the evening, but the busy families have been prospecting along the coast from Plymouth to Salem, and their choice has fallen on the beautiful situation and the rich meadow and timber lands of Wessaguscus. Thomas Morton of Merry Mount has given us a description of Weymouth of that early day. He says: "And when I had more seriously considered of the bewty of the place, with all her faire endowments, I did not think that in all the known world it could be paralleled. For so many goodly groues of trees; dainty, fine, round, rising hillocks, delicate, faire, large plaines; sweete, cristall fountaines, and clear-running streams, that twine in fine meanders through the meads, making so sweete a murmuring noise to hear as would even lull the scenses with delight asleepe, so pleasantly doe they glide upon the pebble stones, jetting most jocundly where they doe meete, and hand in hand run down to Neptune's Court, to pay the yearly tribute which they owe to him as sovereign Lord of all the springs." A poetical, certainly, if not truthful description of New Canaan.

There must be some negotiation as to the possession of the lands, for already other settlers had preëmpted some of the best locations in and along these water-courses and fish-ways. The settlers under Parson Hull are no squatter sovereigns. They propose that the Great and General Court shall determine their right to occupy and possess what

seems to them as the Garden of the Gods for situation and fertility, and so the Court orders as above, and the wisdom of their choice is seen in the fact that descendants of the tenth generation from the first planters occupy the homesteads of their first American ancestry. Zachary of the eighth generation still holds the fort which was planted and manned by Zachary of the first.

## A GLANCE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

While Zachary and Agnes and John and John Kitchen are abroad, like Noah's dove, looking for a resting-place for their ark, let us, if we may, retrace the path across the trackless sea, and, if we can, divine whence they came and the reason of their embarkation. If you will glance at the map of Britain you will find on the southeast coast of England, on Weymouth Bay, and at the mouth of the little river or estuary called Wey, old Weymouth, the sailing-place of Rev. Mr. Hull's company. This is in the county of Dorset; on the north is Somerset, and on the west is Devon. Rev. Mr. Hull was a native of Somersetshire, a graduate of Oxford, and a popular preacher at Northleigh in Devon, for eleven years prior to 1632, when he resigned his parish to gather his company, with which he embarked in 1635. As your eye glances over the map of the counties of Somerset and Dorset, note the familiar names which greet you. Here is Dorchester, and Plymouth; there Taunton and Kingston, Somerset and Bridgewater, Barnstable, Truro, and Falmouth; all familiar names, which have been transplanted to American soil. The settlers still loved their English homes and birth-places, and when they crossed the sea they brought all they could which would stand as souvenirs of the old, old country they still held dear. Few can measure to-day the griefs of parting from the home soil and stock, and exiles alone can tell how they cling to the very household names which street, parish, and homestead bore of their native land. Who of you can tell from which of these adjacent towns or parishes your ancestry came? Probably from several villages, since they selected the name Weymouth, the port of departure, as the name of their new town,—no important town of the settlers holding a preference to it.

Let us, with an eye to find a Bicknell and a keen scent for Bicknell blood, look a little closer at the map of England. There is the old town of Crewkerne, fifty miles or more north of Weymouth, in Somersetshire. What of that? Much. Near it is BICKNELLOR (or Bicknoller) HUNDRED. A Hundred is a part of a county in England, supposed to have originally contained a hundred families or freemen. But what

of Bicknellor? Why the termination *or*? That I interpret to mean of, or pertaining to, the Bicknells; thereby indicating that this portion of the county was occupied by a large number of families of the name of Bicknell.

In a letter from Thomas Graves, a careful archeologist of Weymouth, England, he says: "Bicknell is not a Weymouth name. I have seen it in Dorset records but once, and that in Hutching's history, where he gives the name of Onesiphorus Bicknell, a faithful domestic of Mr. Gooden, who erected a mural tablet in the Church, bearing the following inscription:

" Sacred to the memory of  
ONESIPHORUS BICKNELL,

who lies buried at the entrance into this porch. He died of a decline, on the fourth day of June, 1805, aged 36 years. Robert Gooden, Esq, in whose service he had lived more than three and twenty years, and whom he had served with honesty, fidelity, and integrity, caused this to be erected to perpetuate his worth to future generations."

We are prompted to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," and to express the wish that as noble an epitaph might be honestly written over the grave of every born child of Bicknell heritage.

On the right side of the chancel door, in the same parish church at Over-Compton, is this inscription:

"Seven yards south, in a direct line from this wall, is buried John Bicknell, carpenter. He died 26th November, 1807, aged 72 years."

"AN HONEST MAN IS THE NOBLEST WORK OF GOD."

It is an interesting coincidence that our John was a carpenter, and if he had had a grave-stone it would ~~have~~ probably have borne the same epitaph.

But I have more conclusive evidence that the original home of our family was in Somerset. I have received a copy of births in the parish of Hinton St. George, Crewkerne, Somersetshire, from 1636 to 1816, and copied by William Downe Bicknell, son of John Bicknell, and grandson of Joseph, born in 1776. The first date is May 28, 1637, and records the baptism of a daughter of John and Magdalen Bicknell. But why does our Register commence so provokingly at 1637. Simply because Cromwell and the Commonwealth had something to do with parish records and church monuments at a later date, and their fierce

hatred for all that was Episcopal or Conventional led to the wanton destruction of all these valuable memorials of ancient times.

John, Joseph, Mary, Anne, Grace, William, Richard, Christopher, Magdalen, Jane, Henrietta, Joanna, Elizabeth, Abigail are some of the Christian names which appear on this single record of baptism, marriages, and deaths of our name. From thence the Bicknell name has spread to various parts of England and Wales. Letters from the London Bicknells confirm the statement, and one from John Bicknell, Esq., high sheriff of Lincolnshire, residing at Lincoln, England, establishes the fact as to his family. A letter from Alice Bicknell of Crewkerne, in complimenting our enterprise for so unique a thing as a *Family Gathering*, says: "I fear that all the enterprise of the family crossed the Atlantic with Zachary in 1635." This certainly cannot be true, for we have noble representatives, bearing our name, in London, and other parts of England, distinguished by great success in business-life, by great fidelity to trusts in civil affairs, by high rank in the professions, and by courage in military and naval service.

### HOME-PLANTING AT WEYMOUTH.

But let us come back to Boston, the ancient as well as modern Hub, for a new departure. We can picture in our minds the movements of the Hull party as they come to take possession of what was to be their newly-acquired homes. Entering the mouth of Weymouth Fore River, above North Weymouth, they anchor their vessel, and with their small boats row up the stream and land at Mill Creek. From Burial Hill, where on the morrow we shall dedicate the monument to the memories of our sires, they beheld a fair country spread before them, with river and bay at their feet. They move on, and from the commanding summit of King Oak Hill they take in a landscape and waterscape scarcely equaled in New England. From this Mount of Vision they look down upon the once Promised Land, but now theirs by right of ownership, and they proceed to the allotment of the lands which are to be their homesteads and their farmsteads. First of all, however, the Meeting house must be located, and pastor and teacher. Hull, with his trusty servants, select a site near the Old North Meeting House, and near the Railroad station at North Weymouth, as the spot where religion, law, and social order shall erect a shrine for most devout worshippers. Then the good pastor's lot is located, where now the parsonage stands, the scene of many events of historic as well as romantic interest. Then come the division of the lands and the allotment to each individual of his share in the lands. The General Court



had passed an order "that hereafter noe dwelling-howse shal be builte above halfe a myle from the meeteing-howse, in any new plantacion graunted att this Court, or hereafter to be graunted, without leaue from the Court (except myll-howses and fferme-howses, of such as have their dwelling-howses in some towne); Ipswich, Hingham, Newberry and Weymouth to be included in this order;" and the loyal and obedient settlers proceed to erect their humble dwellings on their chosen sites, on the road leading southward from the church. It is the middle of July, the season of planting is past, and our ancestors must subsist for a year on the simple fare which a scanty purse can furnish. The house must be built, and hands unused to the woodman's axe must fell the trees and hew the timbers for the log cabin. Camp life in July, with whortle-berries, blackberries, and cherries, and bread and milk, and the game with which our forests were then filled, and the clams and fish of the shores and bay, were no unwelcome subsistence to Zachary and Agnes as they passed their first summer on these wild New England shores. The boy John is not yet old enough to bear a hand, except at picking berries and minding the cow-bell; but the servant, John Kitchin, man-of-all-work, trusty and faithful, helps the industrious pair in the erection of their house. Winter is coming on, and there will be need of bushels of nuts from the woods, and dried berries and grapes, and salted fish and game. How bravely they work, as the August and September days come and go! October and November find our little family snugly housed and comfortably fed, and when the first snows of winter fall, they are quite ready for a siege from the storming elements. The rude but comfortable dwelling contained probably only a single room for kitchen, sitting-room, and parlor, with one or two smaller rooms for lodging, and a rough, unfinished attic for the boys. The huge stone chimney is built by no master-mason, at one end of the house, and its ample proportions admit the four-feet logs within the ponderous mouth of the fire place, opening into the main room of the house. Within it, too, they build the stone oven for their baking, with its rapacious maw, where the pumpkin pies received their delicate brown, and the brown bread its healthy relish and Yankee title.

The blacksmith is abroad in this new land, for the iron bake-pan, griddle, and dinner-pot hang over the blazing fire, suspended by the long iron crane, with the pot-hooks and trammels, ever ready for and inviting to daily use. The cooking utensils have all been brought from the father-land, save such as the skill of the husbandman can fashion from wood and wrought iron; and the scanty furnishings of the pantry and closet told of a market three thousand miles away, with but little means to draw from its costly stores. The single round wooden table, serving so many purposes, a few chairs, and a huge, straight-

backed wooden settle, with a wooden cradle for the future Zachary or Mary, were the principal articles of furniture which stood on their neatly sanded floor. Their beds filled with hay or straw, leaves or rushes, and seldom surmounted by one of feathers and covered by homespun linen sheets and home-quilted coverlets, invite to healthy sleep after the day of honest, wearisome toil from sun to sun. This and but little more constitute the home comforts and conveniences of two hundred and fifty years ago. But winter is coming on,—a hard, rough, snowy winter of the old New England type, of which they had little dreamed.

The light snows of Southern England, to which they had been accustomed, were but as dew-drops to the tempests, compared with the heavy snow-blankets of our early New England winters; and, to meet the vigorous cold, heat must be extracted from the half-seasoned wood, the remnants of the timber-cutting and house-building of the Autumn. Cheer up, brave hearts! If, at some moments in the early morning hours, or in the night-watches, or by the light of the evening fire, as memory brought to you the faces of loved ones left behind in “Merrie England,” you should drop the unbidden tear and secretly sigh for the comforts of the old home across the sea, we would not blame you. You dreamed of freedom to worship God, of minds untrammelled by the edicts of civil or religious authority, of property untaxed by the illegal mandates of Charles and his unscrupulous Court and advisers. But did you also fancy that, for all this, you were to purchase the blessing at the great cost of such personal sufferings, trials and privations? and, had you seen the picture that is soon to be sketched, we may fairly suppose that one family would have been absent at the roll-call at Old Weymouth in 1635, and History would have waited with uplifted pen to write of a later Bicknell emigration.

Some of you have undoubtedly anticipated my story, when I relate that the heavy toil of our ambitious progenitor, Zachary, to select his lands, build his house, make a clearing for a garden the coming year, provide for the wants of his family in advance of the winter, and the hard climate of our New England skies, brought fever to the weakened body, and a brief sickness was followed by the death of the stay of the household. It was a dark, sad day when the widow of thirty-seven years, with her boy of twelve summers, followed the remains of husband and father to their last resting-place on Burial Hill.

The only public record which we find of his decease is in the order of The General Court of The Bay, under date of March, 1636. It was ordered,—

“That William Reade, having bought the house and twenty acres of land at Weymouth, unfenced, which was Zachary Bicknell’s, for seven pounds, thirteen shillings and four pence of Richard Rockett and wife,

is to have the sale confirmed by the child when he cometh of age, or else the child to allow such costs as the Court shall think meet."

The widow Agnes, in her days of need and sore trial, found a ready sympathizer in this same Rockett, of Braintree, who took her to his home and his heart ; and the boy John is now transferred to new scenes in Braintree, and, in 1643, is called to mourn the loss of his mother ; she died, as the records state, aged forty-eight years, while Zachary died seven years previous, aged forty-six.

### OLD ENGLAND IN 1635. •

To understand the reasons why 35,000 loyal and respectable subjects of Charles the First should leave Old England for the New between 1620 and 1625, let us look, if we can, through a chink in the wall, into the state of affairs, civil, social, and religious, as they existed in the best land, and under the best government, the sun then shone upon.

Charles the First succeeded his father, James the First of Scotland, in 1624, when Zachary Bicknell was of man's estate, thirty-five years of age, and ten years before the settlement at Weymouth. The great, good act of James was the translation of our English Bible, known as King James's Version, a work which, for the exercise of learning, scholarship, and a zealous religious faith, has not been surpassed in any age. Take him all in all, James was a bigot, a tyrant, a conceited fool. He professed to be the most ardent devotee of piety, and at the same time issued a proclamation that all lawful recreations, such as dancing, archery, leaping, May-games, etc., might be used after divine service, on Sundays. An advocate of religious freedom, he attempted to enforce the most abject conformity in his own Scottish home, against the well-known independence of that section of his realm, and drove the Puritans to seek an asylum in Holland, where they might find liberty to worship God.

Even in our own county of Somerset, the old king consented to an act of tyranny which would grace the age of Henry the Eighth. One Rev. Edmund Peacham, a clergyman in Somersetshire, had his study broken open, and a manuscript sermon being there found in which there was strong censure of the extravagance of the king and the oppression of his officers, the preacher was put to the rack and interrogated, "before torture, in torture, between torture, and after torture," in order to draw from him evidence of treason, but this horrible severity could wring no confession from him. His sermon was not found treasonable by the judges of the King's Bench and my Lord Coke ; but the unhappy man was tried and condemned, dying in jail before the time set for his



execution. Just about this time was the State murder of Overbury, and the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh, one of England's noblest sons, brave and chivalric, who, at the executioner's block, took the axe in his hand, kissed the blade, and said to the Sheriff, "'Tis a sharp medicine, but a sound cure for all diseases." These and kindred acts serve to illustrate the history of a king whose personal and selfish interests overruled all sentiments of honor and regard for his subjects, and who publicly declared that "he would govern according to the good of the commonweal, but not according to the common-will. With such a king as James on the throne, is it a wonder that the more intelligent and conscientious of his subjects,—like the Pilgrims and Puritans,—sought a home on this side the Atlantic, where wild beasts and savage men were their only persecutors?

We are told that "the face of the Court was much changed in the change of the king" from James to Charles I. ; "that the grossnesses of the Court of James grew out of fashion," but the people were slow to learn the difference. Of the two evils, James was to be preferred. Charles ascends the throne with flattering promises, attends prayers and listens to sermons, pays his father's debts and promises to reform the Court. Let us see what he does. The brilliant but profligate Buckingham is retained as prime minister. Charles marries the beautiful Henrietta Maria, the Roman Catholic princess of France. He fits out fleets against Spain and other quarters, and demands heavy taxes to meet his heavy expenses. Parliament is on its dignity, and demands its proper recognition. He dissolves it, and calls another. That is more rebellious, and that he summarily dissolves. Men of high and low degree go to prison at the king's behest, and the disobedient were threatened with severer penalties.

The people of England are aroused, as the king of the earth sets himself against their claims in behalf of the royal prerogatives. The king and the people are at war. Which will come off conqueror? There is only one answer to that question, for the battle is one between the pigmy and the giant. The contest grows sharper as the months go on, and the people are in constant alarm. Murders are common, and even Buckingham, the favorite minister dies at the point of the assassin's knife, and the murderer goes to the Tower and the scaffold accompanied by the tumultuous cheers of London. Soon comes the Parliament of 1629, in which the popular leaders make their great remonstrance against the regal tyranny. In that House sat a plain young man, with ordinary cloth apparel, as if made by an old-country tailor, "his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untonable," with "an eloquence full of fervor." That young man is yet to be heard from. His name is Cromwell, sometimes known as Oliver Cromwell.

His briefly-reported speech of six lines is destined to be weightier than the edicts of a king. The session was brief. Popery and Arminianism, unjust taxation and voluntary payment of taxes not ordered by Parliament were declared treasonable and hostile principles in Church and State,—so said Parliament. “You are a Parliament of vipers,”—so said the king; and, on the 10th of March, Parliament was dissolved, not to meet again in the old historic hall for eleven long years; until, in 1640, the majesty of an outraged people rises superior to the majesty of an outraging ruler. Now follow the attempted riveting of the chains of a despotic and unscrupulous power, which does not understand the temper of the common people, nor the methods of counteracting a great popular upheaval in society.

It is not easy to resist the iron pressure of a tyrant; but, to our ancestors, it was far better than to accept the peace and profit which might follow abject submission. To borrow the words of De Tocqueville, “they cling to freedom for its native charms independent of its gifts,—the pleasure of speaking, acting, and breathing without restraint, under no master but God and the Law.” The Englishmen of the first half of the Seventeenth Century were the fathers of the men who fired shots at Lexington and Concord, “heard round the world.”

But how do the royal prerogatives affect our ancestors in Somersetshire? Our fathers were of common mould, and feel the unjust demand of the tax-gatherer and the insolent demeanor of the crown officers, who threaten fines and imprisonment for a refusal to obey. The people are aroused and are united; some are hopeless, some hopeful. The Crown seems to have its sway, but the far-sighted see the people on the coming throne of righteous judgment. What troubles our ancestors most is the interference with their religious life. Archbishop Laud is now supreme, and the Pope never had a more willing vassal. Ministers are examined as to their loyalty to the government, their sermons are read to private judges of their orthodoxy, the confessional is established, and the altar service is restored. It is a time when earnest men and women cannot be trifled with on soul concerns. Their property may perish or be confiscated, but the right to unmolested worship is older than Magna Charta, and as inalienable as life itself. What is to be done? Resistance or emigration? Which? Resist and die, say Cromwell and Wentworth, Eliot and Hampden. Emigrate and live, say the men and women who came by thousands from all parts of England during the reign of this monarch, and among them were the men and the women whom we honor by this day's celebration.

HOME, SOCIAL, AND CHURCH LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND  
IN 1635.

While the work of upbuilding the new plantation is going on, let us look within the rudely-constructed houses, and note the busy life led by our grandmothers of the olden time, and good-wife Agnes shall be our teacher. The kitchen utensils are of wood, iron, or pewter, with a few articles of tin, silver, and brass. All shine with a lustre born of daily use and daily rubbing. No butcher's stalls supplied their tables, and the best brands of Genesee, St. Louis, and California flours were slumbering beneath the unknown Western prairies. The butchered fatling, sheep, or swine was divided between the nearest neighbors, and these mutual exchanges and purchases were the simple market style of two hundred years ago.

The three meals furnish the regular daily rations to a hungry family which meets at the horn-call at seven in the morning, at mid-day, and at the close of the day's work in the evening. The ten-hours-a-day system, in or out of doors, would have been a strange thing to the fathers, however agreeable it may be to their children. Between the hours of cooking and the preparation of the meals, we may hear the merry music of the old-fashioned piano, — the spinning-wheel, or the flax-wheel ; and if the sheep have left their fleeces for the family clothing, we may also hear the heavy clatter of the looms. After sheep-shearing came the washing, carding, spinning, and weaving ; and many are the wondrous tales of industry and alacrity in changing the woolen coat of the sheep to the woolen coat or gown of some household wearer. It is even told us that the wool which was on the sheep's back in the morning was ready made in clothing for domestic wear before the day's sands had run out. What say you, blushing grand-daughters of to-day, to such feats of handiwork of your grandmothers of ye olden day ? They spun the fireside yarn to a better purpose, if not with equal diligence, than those who spin *street yarn* in city or country two-and-a-half centuries later.

Our ancestry of two centuries ago were a church-going people ; and in the midst of rugged scenes and hard toil, they remembered the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. We have already mentioned the fact that the lot has been selected for a house of worship, and a rude log structure soon served the purpose of sheltering the congregation from wind, sun, and rain, though not from cold, for the stove and furnace are among the future inventions, and the foot-stove is the only protection against the chills of winter.

Go back with me in imagination to an October Sabbath in 1635.

You look out upon the little settlement gathered about King Oak Hill, Burial Hill, and the neighboring localities, and there is no appearance of business or pleasure. It is the Puritan Sabbath. The fields are green with their autumn verdure, the forests are brilliant with their changing foliage, the waters, the beautiful rivers and bay are unstirred, except by the gentle winds of the morning. Even the birds have taken on a meditative mood, as they swarm on the hills and in the groves for their southern flights. Quiet and repose rest on Nature, and God's works proclaim his glory. It is the delightful rest of the Christian Sabbath. There are busy men and women in those rude houses on yonder hills and by the quiet waters, but their business to-day is to worship God, and in His service is their delight. By and-by the stillness is broken, not by the Sabbath bell, but by the morning drum, which tells that the hour of service draws nigh. From our standpoint on King Oak Hill, let us note the congregation as they come up to worship. From the North come whole families on foot, along the well-marked bridle-way, and Parson Hull leads the devout company, who, if they converse at all, only speak of the goodness of the Lord and his merciful dealings with his children. The young men and maidens form a goodly company as they come in groups; and now and then we see a group of only two, whose hearts and thoughts are evidently bent on devotional subjects, and, though the way were twice as long, would be twice too short for their mutual spiritual enjoyment. Along the path over the fording-place come two on horseback, a lady and gentleman, with a child in front. By their side, on foot, walk man and wife, with whom the present riders by turns share saddle and pillion, for there are no roads now, and we must wait many a year for the first "calash" to stir up a wonderment among the people. The nimble boys and girls are going to meeting barefoot, and the older misses are carrying their shoes and stockings in their hands, and will put them on when they get near the meeting-house, and put them off again on their return home. They must wait two hundred years for supplies from Lynn and Weymouth;—home manufactures these, however. It's a pity there are no smooth roads or side-walks for their tender feet; but never mind, they have roughed it all the week, and the owners had rather scratch or soil their feet than those shoes just made. Only the sick stay at home to-day, and those who nurse them. Some, probably, are spurred to duty by the law, which declares that, "if any lazy or slothful person in any of the towns neglects to come to the public worship of God, they shall forfeit for every such default the sum of ten shillings, or be publicly whipped."

The congregation on horseback have dismounted, by the aid of the



horse-block in front of the meeting-house, and their horses have been tied to the nearest trees. After inquiries concerning the health of family and friends, they enter the sanctuary, of which, if they could not exclaim, "How amiable are thy tabernacles," could join most truthfully with the royal poet, "The sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God."

Worthy Parson Hull enters, and the whole congregation rise and remain standing as he walks up the aisle and ascends the pulpit, in token of their respect for their pastor and teacher. The invocation ended, Mr. Hull reads an hymn from the only psalm-book in the house, or from the Bible, which contains a metrical version of the Psalms, or Tate and Brady's collection, and hands the book over the pulpit to one of the deacons sitting in the deacon's seat below, who reads one line, which all the people unite in singing, and after the slow ones are through, reads another line and sings it, and so on, until the whole hymn is sung to "Old Hundred," or some other grand old tune.

Parson Hull then reads the Scripture and then leads the people in the long prayer, never less than twenty minutes in length, and sometimes reaching on toward the end of an hour. The Word of God is read, with a faithful commentary on its teachings; and, after another hymn, an hour's sermon, by the hour-glass, is preached, unless the parson's ideas sooner run out. The benediction is pronounced, and the families eat their dinners about the premises, and wait for the afternoon services and sermon, which may be a continuance of the morning's discourse, with an "improvement" for practical thoughts attached. The afternoon's exercises over, the people scatter, as they came, to their homes,—the elder and more devout to study the Scriptures, the youth to learn the Assembly's Catechism, and to receive religious teachings from the Bible. Thus passed, in the main, a Sabbath in Weymouth in 1635. Tell me, has the added wisdom and experience of these generations found any better way to worship God or to reverence his sanctuaries? May we not fear that the truths of Increase Mather's noted sermon, entitled "Ichabod, or 'The Glory of the Lord is departing from New England,'" may yet dawn on us?

### AN ORTHODOX STORY OF AN ORTHODOX FAMILY.

As the Bicknells are, always have been, and always will be noted as a religious family, paying the highest respect to all the essentials of an upright Christian life, it will not be out of order, and may interest many, to hear a real story in proof of the orthodoxy of our race a century-and-a half ago. You may not remember that John the First was the father

of eleven children, three sons and eight daughters. One son, Zachary, born 1668, of his second wife, Mary Porter, removed to what was then called "the westward end of Swanzy," Mass., now Barrington, R. I., about 1705. He had six children,—Zachariah, Joshua, Hannah, James, Mary, and Peter. Zachariah and James began to be among the first men of Barrington from 1730 to 1735, and were members of the Congregational Church of that town. The Western emigration fever seized them about this time, and both moved westward, forty miles or more, to what is now, and was then, Ashford, Conn. Ashford was an orthodox town in an orthodox colony, and we find Zachary and James members of the church in good and prominent standing. In proof of their orthodoxy, Zachariah was a man of war, ensign of the train-band, before he had been a citizen of Ashford six months, and was promoted to the captaincy in less than two years; while James was a Deputy in the Connecticut General Court almost continuously from 1737 to 1756, and one of Her Majesty's Justices almost as long. Pure Pædobaptists only bore rule in those days.

In 1745, one Rev. John Bass, of Braintree, a graduate of Harvard College, was invited to become the pastor of the Congregational Church at Ashford. On examination, some dissatisfaction was manifested, but the Consociation was appealed to, and that body decided that Mr. Bass was a safe shepherd for that flock. Affairs went on quietly for four years or thereabouts; Mr. Bass preached acceptably; the people approved. A few, however, of the eagle eyed and rigid of his hearers suspected that he was departing from the "Calvinsian class," to which he claimed to belong at the time of his ordination. Jealousy soon arose from his neglect to preach some of the peculiar views of his great leader, and also from his advice to examine their religious principles as revealed in the Bible and not to take them second-hand. A church-meeting was asked, to which Mr. Bass replied, "That as the people were generally in a ruffle, 'twas best to defer calling them together till they were cooler, and so fitter for action." Back went a letter to Mr. Bass, signed by James and Zachariah Bicknell and eight other brethren, saying, "There is great uneasiness among us on account of the principles you and some others hold, which we think very dangerous." If you do not warn a church-meeting to look into these affairs, you will put us under a necessity of taking some other course. A letter from Mr. Bass, in reply, asking for liberty in religious opinions, "was not in the least satisfactory," and was even hissed at, and these specific objections were presented, in substance as follows:

"The grounds of our uneasiness are,—First, We think you are gone from what you professed to the Council in the matter of original sin. You then professed that it was not only our infelicity, but our sin, that we fell in Adam; and now you seem to hold only the depravity

and deny the guilt ; it appears to us in your preaching, praying, and conversing,—(1) You neglect to preach the doctrine of original sin. You seem to lay the chief stress of our salvation on our moral obedience (we hold obedience necessary as the fruit and effect of faith), but in the matter of justification to have no part. (2) You don't preach up the doctrine of election as it is recorded in Romans ii. 5, 6, and multitudes of other texts that plainly point out our personal, absolute, eternal election ; also the doctrine of particular election and doctrine of perseverance. When you baptize children, you don't so much as mention one word of the child's being guilty of sin, or of Christ's blood being applied to the mystical washing from sin, or any other words that represent the child as being guilty of original sin. You also approve Mr. Taylor's book, which so plumply denies original sin."

James Bicknell's name heads the letter ; and the probability is, that as Justice of the Peace, and a ready writer, he drew up this fearful indictment against Parson Bass. The church-meeting was called, the reverend minister was brought to the bar, and the following serious and awful question was propounded. It was called a "sifting question" in the Church records, and it proved such to the pastor: "Sir, don't you think that a child brings sin enough into this world with it to damn it forever?" On the answer to this most comprehensive interrogatory, put by the Justice to the suspected minister, hangs his orthodoxy. "I do not," frankly replies the minister ; and, without further examination, the Church proceeded to vote, "That it held the doctrine of original sin, as set forth in the eighteenth question and answer of the Shorter Catechism, an essential condition of church fellowship and communion."

It was also declared that Mr. Bass had departed from the true theory of the doctrine of original sin ; "that he denied a covenant made with Adam for his posterity ; that he was deficient in teaching the doctrines of particular election, particular redemption, effectual calling, and the perseverance of the saints." Mr. Bass was advised to seek light on these topics. A Council was chosen, the case was heard, orthodoxy triumphed, and Parson Bass was bounced, going thence to Providence, as pastor of the Unitarian Church in that city. As a parting shot to the Consociation and the people, among whom were some of our ancestors, he wrote in the Church Records, June 5, 1751, "I was dismissed from my pastoral relations to the Church and people of Ashford for dissenting from the Calvinistic sense of the Quinquarticular points, which I ignorantly subscribed to before my ordination ; for which, and all my other mistakes, I beg the pardon of Almighty God." \*

\* See *History of Windham Co., Conn.*, vol. i. pp. 544, et seq. Ellen D. Larned, Thompson, Conn.

## A PART OF THE "OLD STORY."

The cards on the walls of this Church to-day reveal names that are household words in Bicknell homes : John, Zachary, Thomas, William, Noah, James, Luke, Humphrey, Otis, Jacob, Ebenezer, Daniel, Joseph, Nathan, Benjamin, Ezra, David, Samuel, Peter, Joshua, Nathaniel, are familiar titles of our boys ; while Mary, Ruth, Naomi, Joanna, Experience, Elizabeth, Hannah, Olive, Amy, Alice, Emma, Sallie, Ella, Lucy, Nancy, Anna, Eliza, Clara, Elmira, Harriet, Rosella, their sisters, —not lost, but transformed by other names, in multitude like unto the stars,—were as good girls as New England families have seen ; and in full testimony of which the Pratts, Dyers, Truphants, Bates, Richards, Turners, Maurans, Tirrells, Goodspeeds, Hayfords, Reeds, Vials, Torreys, Orcutts, Blanchards, Frenchs, Shaws, Coopers, Carpenters, Forbes, Noyes, Watsons, Lincolns, Raymonds, Cranes, of this and other communities, bear swift and satisfactory witness.

John, our common ancestor, a ten-year-old boy when he came to America, grew to man's estate and married Mary, the daughter of ——, who gave him three children,—John, the first male Bicknell born in America, and two daughters, Mary, who married John Dyer, and Naomi, of whom we have no record. His first wife, Mary, died March 25, 1658 ; and December 2 of the same year, John married Mary Porter, daughter of Richard Porter of Weymouth. Six daughters and two sons were the product of this wedlock,—Ruth, who married James Richards ; Mary, who married Maurice Truphant of Weymouth ; Thomas, who married Ann Turner of Hingham, and removed to Middleborough ; Zachary, who married Hannah Smith of Swanzey, and removed to Swanzey, now Barrington, R. I. ; and Joanna, Experience, Elizabeth, and Hannah, of whom we have no records as yet brought to light

Our grand-sire, John the First, was a capable and an industrious man. As evidence of the capability, witness two wives, and eleven children, to all of whom he gave a comfortable support ; and in his will, at death, a fair property. He was a carpenter by trade, and how many of the "lean-to's" of Old Weymouth and the adjoining towns grew up under his clever tools and skilled eye no one lives to tell. He was an orthodox carpenter, for he was employed by the Old North Church to make—"tite"—a leaky roof, and was selected by the town of Weymouth, to go to the Great and General Court, to help patch up her early legislation. Possibly his mechanical skill suggested some new plank in the platform of our socio-religio-civil Commonwealth. He lived respected, and died lamented, 1668, aged fifty-four years :

"An honored life, a peaceful death,  
And Heaven to crown it all."



Of the three sons of John the First, only one remained in Weymouth to perpetuate the name and family. John, junior, lived and died in Weymouth, probably in North Weymouth, — as many believe, in the older part of the house now owned and occupied by his descendants of our name. He had five sons and two daughters. According to our historian, Mary married John Turner of Bridgewater, and Sarah married William Sargent; and his children and children's children still dwell in Weymouth, Hingham, Abington, Braintree, Quincy, Boston, and adjoining towns until this day. The headstone which stands above his grave on Burial Hill bears this record:

Here Lyes ye body of  
MR. JOHN BICKNELL, SENR.,  
Died August 4th,  
1737,  
In ye 84th  
Of His Age.

In him we find the longevity of the family well established, a physical quality which has not departed from the race through these generations, and is to-day illustrated in John's descendants, some of whom are now in the eighties. Notably in that line were Nathaniel, who died at Abington in 1804, aged 79; Captain Nathaniel, the grandfather of Rev. George W. Bicknell, who died in 1872, aged 95; Noah, who died in 1872, aged 89; Luke, who died in 1870, aged 83; James, who died in 1862, aged 72; and William Bicknell of Hartford, Maine, father of William Emory of Weymouth and Boston (and grandfather of Edward Bicknell, Esq., the orator of to-morrow), who is now hale and hearty, at the age of 79 years.

The Bicknells of Maine and their descent are from the line of John, through the grandson Nathaniel of the fifth, and Daniel of the sixth generations, who located in that State in the early part of the century. His descendants are quite widely scattered in that State; some have come back to Boston and vicinity, while others have gone to the South and the West. Prominent among the descendants of John, now living, are Quincy, our historian of Hingham, Zachary, Robert, Francis, and others of Weymouth; Hon. Q. A. Tirrell, of Natick; William E., Edward, Emory O., Joseph, and James, of Boston; Albion H., the distinguished artist, of Malden; Alfred the poet, Rev. E. H. Wyman, Ph.D., of Malden, the chaplain of the day; William and his numerous and respectable progeny of Maine, one of whom graduated at Bates College in June last; the Rev. George W., of Lowell, whose ability and enthusiasm make him a welcome guest at the family board; Rev. William E., of Rowe, whose talented son has

completed the first year at Williams College with more first honors than are ordinarily given to two or three ; another Baptist Reverend in Maine, from whom we have as yet heard but little ; and A. J. Bicknell, of New York, who, as architect and publisher, has made a name in the world, and whose brother, Luke W. of Cummington, is a man of sound views, and probably one of those whom Governor Long refers to of our family as fit to be governors of the old Commonwealth.

Zachary was the first Bicknell to come to Weymouth ; and his grandson Zachary was the first Bicknell who was seized with a Western fever, and emigrated *from* Weymouth. Perhaps his good-wife, Hannah Smith, whom he courted in Swansey and brought home to Weymouth, had a word to say about the beautiful lands on the Sowams and the Narragansett. Possibly land speculation, gold-mines, oil-stocks, clam-banks, or some other attraction, led him to pack up his goods, and with his wife and four children, steer their course for "the westward end of Swansea." About 1705, certain it is they went, and they stayed. Zachary was soon a leading man in the town, not an unusual thing for our folks. In the year 1711 he, with twenty-eight others, petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts Bay to make a new town of that part of Swansey. The reason was a good one, as you will see. Old Swansey was a good Baptist town, founded by Parson Myles, of Wales. It had a Baptist Church founded in 1663, but no orthodox church. Our fathers were thorough orthodox Congregationalists. Their petition for a new town opens as follows :

"The petition of us the subscribers, inhabitants on the westward end of Swansea, most humbly sheweth, that among all the outward and external blessings with which the Lord of all mercy blesseth any people withall in this world. that of the House of God is among them ; the Gospel purely preached. and the ordinances of Christ's kingdom duly administered, and fathers and children settled under pastoral watch ; care, and government, under pious, learned, orthodox ministers, being in our esteem the greatest." The petitioners go on to speak of the "bitterness" they feel "for the very mention of no settled minister, learned and orthodox, no church of Christ settled in order, no pastor to feed Christ's lambs among us. This is, as we believe, an uncomfortable thought unto all the holy and reverend mininisters that know our state. So it is a heart-breaking thought to us to think, that when we are called out of this world to consider in what state we leave our posterity, exposed to a ruining enticement from pure gospel and gospel ordinances."

"All which sorrow and misery either felt or feared, if the Honorable General Court do in mercy and pity prevent by granting a township according to the limits of Captain Samuel Low's military company in

Swansea, thereby enabling us to settle and maintain a pious, learned, and orthodox minister for the good of us and our posterity, God will be glorified, Christ's kingdom enlarged, and will oblige your most humble servant, ever to pray.

Signed, Zachary Bicknell and twenty-eight others, among whom were Humphreys, Vialls, Pecks, Salisburys, Turners, and John Rogers, a lineal descendant of the martyr John of the Smithfield stake. The old Baptist town objects and protests, but in 1717 something must be done, for a Weymouth triumvirate is sent as agents to Boston for the society. It is Josiah Torrey, Zachary Bicknell, and Samuel Humphrey, who secure the ears and the votes of the General Court, and the new town, Barrington, is ordered and decreed to exist, as it has until this day.

Zachary of Swansea had four sons, Zach, James, Joshua, and Peter, The two elder sons between 1730—31 took to themselves wives, and with them journeyed into a far country, even the fertile valleys of Connecticut, at Ashford. Here they lived and died, and their names still live in their descendants in Eastern Connecticut. A reflex wave of this western tidal move flowed back upon Rhode Island, and the names of Bicknell in the towns on the west side of Narragansett Bay are descendants of James or Zachariah of Ashford. The more venture-some went westward, and more than a century ago settled in the fertile Mohawk valley near Rome, N. Y. Here we find to day a sturdy stock represented by Rev. James Bicknell, a stalwart Baptist preacher, 87 years of age; his brother Moses, nearly as old (85); and his sisters. Martha Knapp and Hannah Smith, well on to or among the eighties. Of that stock was Hon. Bennett Bicknell, an eminent lawyer of Western, N. Y., who was the first representative of the Bicknell name in the Lower House of Congress. His picture, which I am glad to have, bears the Bicknell type, and I think you would all agree that he might be an honest Congressman. Of that line are James S., of Buffalo; Charles T., of Ohio; Henry E., in Chicago; Anson D., of Iowa; and John, of California. All are progressive, enterprising, intelligent people, and their interest in the family is strong and abiding.

Joshua, the next son of Zachary, inherited the paternal estate, and stuck by the stuff, and his descendants still dwell in goodly numbers and in respectable rank in the old home town of Barrington. Joshua died at the age of 64. The inventory of his goods and chattels was £6324, 14s, 8p. Among the chattels were "My negro man Dick, and female negro child Rose," who were made free by his will, and each was given one hundred pounds as a freedom-gift. His son Joshua, my grandfather, was a man who served his generation well, and slept with his fathers in 1837, at the age of 79. He represented his town in the Legislature of Rhode Island almost continuously from 1787 to 1825,

and was a justice of the Supreme Court of the State 23 years. He bore the office of Deacon of the church, and was the trusted treasurer of the society for 40 years. "Old Aristides" was the name his legislative associates gave him, and his name is now honored in Rhode Island, though he has slept peacefully nearly half a century. Of his sons, Allen represented his native town in the Legislature for several years in the House and Senate, and two grandsons have occupied the office of Commissioner of Public Schools of Rhode Island, one succeeding the other, the services of the two covering over one-third of the period since the office was created in 1841. Three of Joshua's children still live. One, the youngest, in the house built by his father, is now in his eighty-second year; the next older, Elizabeth, is now in her eighty-fourth year; and her next older brother is now in his eighty-seventh year. The average age of the four oldest children at death was  $81\frac{3}{4}$  years. The average age of the three now living is  $83\frac{1}{2}$  years. "With long life will I satisfy them and shew them my salvation."

Peter, the youngest son, lived and died in Barrington, but his children emigrated to Western Massachusetts and Vermont, and have left a goodly company of descendants in the Green Mountain and Bay States. Some of the most noted school-masters of Vermont were Bicknells, and of her Methodist Divines we have Rev. D. H. Bicknell, of Sheldon, whose interest in Bicknell genealogy is exceptionally strong. Our excellent friend Elra, who attends Bicknell Reunions as a religious duty, from real orthodox principle and convictions, is a chip of the good old block, well born from Peter, surnamed The Rock.

But what of that third son, Thomas? He married Ann Turner, and removed to Middleboro, where he died in 1719. Thence went a son, Japhet, to Attleboro, and Thomas to Worcester; and thence I cannot tell all of their wanderings through these years of honest toil and self-denial. Suffice to say that of that branch we have in New York successful merchants in Joseph I. and his son George. An honorable ex-Congressman in Hon. Geo. A. Bicknell, now Judge Bicknell, of the Supreme Bench of Indiana; a faithful pastor in one son, and a lieutenant in the U. S. Navy in another. We have to-day two M.D.'s in the ninth generation from Zachary,—Dr. Charles V. Chapin, of Providence, and Dr. Emma V. P. Culbertson of Philadelphia,—and one in the eighth,—Dr. George W. Bicknell, of Beloit, Wisconsin. Of Dr. Bicknell's Syrups I have heard excellent reports, but I hope that none of our race will ever have occasion to use them. If you would like to try an experiment, eat green watermelons, and send for a bottle of Bicknell's Dysentery Syrup. A sure cure is guaranteed to members of the family.

But enough, I hear you say: let us have a chance at the story our-

selves ; and, dear souls, so you shall. My purpose is accomplished if I have assorted the families so that each will recognize his brethren of the seventh, eighth, and ninth generations. If any still wander in the mazes of a complicated genealogy, not knowing whither the thread of fate leads you, go directly to our historian, Quincy, and he will solve the doubt and unravel the mystery. I purposed at the outset to talk a little of our family history of New England two and one-half centuries ago ; to tell you why and whence Zachary and Agnes came to Weymouth ; how they lived, what they did, when they died, and what they have left us. I love the story, "the old, old story, because I know 'tis true," and I want all of our descent to love it too. Make these old names familiar to the ears of the children of the tenth and the twentieth generations. They cannot think too often or too well of a Puritan ancestry. We may remove far away from their homes, but let us stick firmly to their sturdy principles of industry, truth, virtue, and honor. It was *noble*, HEROIC to stand for principle when weaker souls fainted or fell away. It was grander still to plant a family on American soil, whose name, through two hundred and fifty years, is everywhere a synonym for manly and womanly character and Christian living. We stand united on the platform of purity in the family, temperance in the life, freedom and honor in the State. No prison-door ever closed behind one of our name, and the dram-shop has not eaten up our hard earnings. Industry, and her twin sister Intelligence, walk by the side of our men and women in all their walks, be they humbler or higher, and a good hope of a reunited life beyond, animates us.





# AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE DEDICATION OF THE BICKNELL  
FAMILY MONUMENT AT BURIAL HILL, NORTH  
WEYMOUTH, SEPTEMBER 21, 1882,

By EDWARD BICKNELL, A.M., OF BOSTON.

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Near the close of a most charming as well as thoughtful lecture which Canon Kingsley delivered some years ago, there occurred a sentence that embodies the thought which has brought us here to-day. He said that it is by sentiment rightly understood that nations live. That sentence crystallizes the ideas that our nobler feelings are but the higher sentiments ; that a love of country and of heroic bravery, that a reverence for our ancestors on account of their virtues, are simply sentiments nobly developed, and that, inspired by such sentiments, a nation grows and prospers ; that without that inspiration it decays and dies. The monuments which, since the war, have sprung up all over our country are utterances of the same thought. We Americans are such a practical people that we need something apparent to our external senses to recall to us those sentiments which are really worthy the devotion of our lives.

In this spirit we have assembled here to-day to dedicate to the memory of our common ancestors this memorial stone. The simplicity of the model, the purity and the substantial quality of the material, typify well the virtues of that couple who we fondly believe were worthy members of a noble company. We know not just the manner of man, in the lesser details of life, Zachary Bicknell was, but we do know that no common man could have been one of the Pilgrims ; we do know that no weakling, no man of spasmodic energy, could have taken his life in his hands, braved the terrors of the unknown seas and the bleak coast of wild New England, for a principle. And of her who was his companion, who bore so well the unequal struggle which wore out so many of the women of early New England, we can well believe she had all the virtues of a Puritan woman, and all the graces, too, that strict living, patient forbearance, and purity of character always give. Rarely do we think of what life must have been in Zachary's house. The ac-

counts that we have of home-life in those days are so exceedingly meagre that it needs a sympathetic imagination to picture it. Agnes' life was an earnest one, or she could not have been a Puritan. Thoughts of amusement for the sake of amusement were too rarely, if at all, in her mind. Her books were few,—the Bible, a few sermons, a catechism, and the like. Yet the Puritan woman had a charm which draws us to her after all these years. It was the charm of intelligence, of earnestness, of character. The daughters of New England now set no limit to the possibilities of their acquirement of knowledge; no art or science which cannot claim a disciple among them. All this is well, but with only their religion and their duty to their families for their constant thought, the mothers of New England reared a generation the impress of which has been felt all over the world.

The Puritans came here to stay, and they brought their families. So with Zachary and Agnes came their son John, whose whole life, practically, was passed around the spot where we stand. New England can claim all of him for her own, and to him and his family also we dedicate this monument. In his family we find somebody we know something of. His son John was the first Bicknell born in this country. He became a prominent man, and in those days sterling merit was the only recommendation which secured advancement. And we do not forget that other member of Zachary's family, the serving-man, John Kitchin, type of character peculiar to New England. The religion of the forefathers found a practical illustration in the way they treated all who were dependent upon them. He was a member of the family, and shared in its fortunes. The same rules of conduct, the same inspirations, the same desire for self-improvement, animated the master and the servant; and in later years we find this same serving-man's descendant a graduate from the University at Cambridge. Indeed, we dedicate this monument to the memory of the first Bicknell families who lived upon these shores. Their bodies have crumbled into the dust of earth, but this gathering of their children in peace and plenty amid the scenes which saw the lives and labors of two-and-a-half centuries ago shows us that they themselves can never die. In the family they created, in the sturdy independence they bequeathed to us, in the virtues they were examples of, they live forever.

There is something peculiarly appropriate in asking one of the younger members of the family to take a prominent part in these exercises, and it was probably with this idea that your committee placed upon me a duty which could be performed so much more brilliantly and satisfactorily by others. It is to the young people that this monument should especially speak. The memories and sentiments that hallow this spot are the links which bind the founders of this family with the generations here

and to come. Those of you who are in the midst of life's struggle, and those who, having borne the brunt of the fight, are now resting from your labors, need the inspiration of the noble deeds of the past less than do the young recruits. We who come after you must have held up to us constantly the high standards our forefathers bore. Never must we be allowed to forget that this country was founded in virtue and stern self-sacrifice ; that its growth and prosperity have been because of those same old-fashioned virtues which Zachary and Agnes must have been examples of.

I need not rehearse the well known history of those early years in which Zachary and Agnes lived. It has been told and retold until it is a household story. The particulars of the career, public and private, of our own ancestors have been told you elsewhere, and however appropriate to this occasion a rehearsal of them might be, I prefer to omit it.

It was no holiday-trip that brought the Pilgrims here. The shores of New England were no enchanted isles, and the Puritans didn't dream that they were. No greed for untold wealth lured them hither. They gave up their homes, their material prosperity, to found a colony consecrated to their principles of religion, and they never turned back. Through the dangers and sufferings of those early winters they kept steadfastly on. It was the principles they believed in, the purity of their intentions, the greatness of their purpose, which inspired them. No doubt thoughts of old England came over them. Plymouth, Weymouth, and the other names in this new world, show how their thoughts and affections turned toward the old world they had left behind more in sorrow than in anger. Memories of the old places at home, the pleasant and ancient villages where they spent their childhood, grew up to manhood, won their wives and reared their children, must have filled them with tender recollections, and made the stern reality of their present existence all the harder, but they never faltered. We, the descendants of so noble an ancestry, honor ourselves in building this memorial of them, and we are unworthy of such an honor if we allow ourselves to be unfaithful to the ancient traditions of our people. It was the sacred flag of Mahomet which inspired his followers with his own enthusiasm so that they did deeds almost superhuman ; it was the helmet of Navarre which filled the army of Henry the Fourth with his own courage ;—may this memorial inspire us with the earnestness and fidelity that characterized the noble men and women of New England ; may this stone continually remind us of their devotion to principle for the sake of principle, and be, as it were, our oriflamme in the conflict which is always going on with meanness and hypocrisy and corruption, in public and in private places ; may it always keep before us the idea of a perfect and noble manhood and womanhood. So animated, none of

us, no matter what may come, will ever bring disgrace upon our name.

But no matter how well they wrought, no matter how enduring their work may seem,—unless we, in whose hands the results of their labors are left as an inheritance, take up the work which they laid down, their lives were in vain. Mere admiration on our part amounts to nothing. To sit at home in our easy chairs, before a cosy fire, and read of the cold and the want of those early winters in that struggling colony, and how through earnestness and perseverance they triumphed over the difficulties which beset them, is a waste of time unless, refreshed and encouraged by the perusal, we be up and doing

On yonder hill stands a simple column in honor of the patriotic dead of Weymouth. Those men who died, died for a sentiment. Its upward-pointing shaft tells us there is something more worthy of the devotion of our lives than a selfish enjoyment of this world and its possessions. That monument is a silent though effective teacher of our duty to our country in the time of danger ; it is an enduring reminder of the fact that heroism lifts a man higher than the common crowd. There are some who sneer at memorials of the past, and smile when we talk of the effect of a monument commemorating a heroic deed. But who can say that thoughts suggested by these monuments of the past,—thoughts of this country founded amidst the struggles of our fathers and cemented with the blood of brave men,—will not inspire our descendants to noble endeavor? Who can say that these very memorials of the brave days of old do not nourish in children ideas of bravery, of patriotism, of country, which in after-life will make them worthy and zealous citizens? Who can say that without such memorials, appealing at first to the curiosity and then to the natural sympathy of childhood, they would become sordid, base, mere money gatherers? Is it presumptuous to believe that this monument which we dedicate to-day may inspire us to deeds of noble daring? It should stir all there is in us of family pride and honest emulation. No patent of nobility could honor any of us so much as to be worthy descendants of a true man and woman,—a couple who walked their way on earth in the fear of God; and whose bravery and heroic endurance nothing could break down. We do not have the same work to do. We may not find a martyr's crown or a soldier's laurel ; but peace hath her victories. The same country which our forefathers founded, which these soldiers fought for, is left to us to preserve. With its increasing years and prosperity have come new dangers and greater responsibilities. We must do our part to be worthy successors of an ancestry of workers. That same steadfastness of purpose should control us which controlled them. The brave soldiers whose death is so fittingly commemorated there are honored because they served their country well. We may not serve it like them,

but we can use the power that is in us to make its government purer and better and nobler. To do less than that is to show that we are not able to feel the grandeur of a life animated by high principles, and that as far as taking up the work our fathers began we are failures, and but cumber the ground.

There is a place in Arabia made sacred by some incident in the life of Mahomet, where in old times the devout Mussulman must take an oath of fealty to the prophet and his holy religion before he could become a knight. Just as those wild fanatics, if you will, but yet men true to high sentiment, journeyed there to take an oath never to desert the cause of the holy prophet, and just as they gained new strength and courage and devotion to the cause by a sight of the holy place, so may we find this place a never-ending source of noble sentiments. To that cause we dedicate this monument ; and may we, as did those knights of old, kneel before this stone hallowed by the lives of noble men and women, in a place sanctified by the ashes of so many of their descendants, and swear that when we go forth to do battle,—as fight we must with the giant wrongs that menace the future of our country,—we will never falter, but strike home ; that never will we be lured by bright promises of selfish and dishonest gain, but keep steadily on with only one thought,—to stand by, at any cost, the principles we believe in. We can better afford to fall before the wrath of the multitude for an honest belief, than to be praised by others only to despise ourselves.

These thoughts which I have advanced are entirely practical. Were the sentiments and the principles illustrated in the lives of the Pilgrims the rule rather than the exception, public men would not wish, much less dare, to pursue the sinuous path they now follow in their blind devotion to party and personal politics. A devotion to principle leads men in a straight path to the end ; it is only time-servers who puzzle us by the intricacy of their course. Nobler men would come to the front, and we should be spared hearing of incidents that make us blush for our country. John Hampden and men like him were inspired through and through with the sentiment of liberty, and because they were so inspired we now enjoy rights known then only in theory.

A sincere devotion to principle, an earnest love of country, a perseverance which only smiles upon obstacles, are what it seems to me a study of our ancestors teaches us. If this offering to the memory of Zachary and Agnes Bicknell and their family will create and keep alive the sentiments which are at the bottom of those old-timed virtues, this monument will not have been reared in vain.







# A CHAPTER OF FAMILY HISTORY.

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By QUINCY BICKNELL, Esq.,

FAMILY HISTORIAN.

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*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Bicknell Family Association :*

Honored by your kindness in the position I occupy as your historian, obligation to the duty imposed and respect to your honorable preferment call me to give some account of the service which such obligation and preferment demand. In accepting this service you will remember that I promised to do only what many pressing prior engagements would enable me to do, and that what I might accomplish in the matter of our family history would be incident to the work I was already engaged upon. With this explanation, I will repeat briefly what has been accomplished in gathering the materials out of which such a history must be composed.

Mr. Ellery Bicknell Crane, of Worcester, the compiler of the Crane genealogy, very kindly prepared a circular of questions, embracing the facts necessary to be known of each individual family. These, the Hon. Thomas W. Bicknell, the president of our association, caused to be printed in a neat form, suitable for circulation. I have mailed one or more copies of these to every member of the family known to me, whose record I had not previously obtained. From many of the persons thus addressed, I have received answers. These answers are more or less full, as the recipients had the necessary means for determining, or caught the whole scope of the questions presented. From quite a number, however, I have had no response, owing perhaps to the want of sufficient data, or time to collect the same. I trust, however, that this delay in answering may not be final on their part, but that they will send such information as they may now possess, and leave the perfecting of the record to such time as they may be able to complete the same.

I would here suggest to such members of the family as have already furnished as full records as possible, to remember that our work of compiling a family history is one likely to consume considerable time, and that the constant changes taking place in our families by the interesting event of marriage, the joyous one of birth, and the sadness of death, are such that the historian should be apprized of, so that he may continually keep his record abreast with these events. I have now the record of more than four hundred families, comprising from sixteen to eighteen hundred names. A full and complete record, carrying down the lines of descent, both in the male and female lines, would probably call for more than twenty thousand names. A genealogical work which should wholly ignore the lines of the females would be very incomplete, and would subject it to the very just and deserved criticism which our already published account, in the brief history of the family, received from one of our ladies of Bicknell descent, when she raised the inquiry "whether the compiler thought that the Bicknell children were all boys."

To this implied charge, the compiler must plead that he has very distinct knowledge to the contrary on this point, from the time when his scalp-locks suffered as the result of certain boyish pranks to that other time when the roughness of that uncouth period of life became melted into admiration and respect for the beautiful developments of life and character which have marked the girls of the family. The reason that they were not named in the "brief history" was because there had not been time nor opportunity to trace them out. As the girls, as yet, change their names by marriage, it becomes more difficult to follow their descendants, as they must be picked out from all other descendants bearing their husbands' respective names. I would suggest to the women of our descent that they turn their attention to this matter, and see what they can accomplish. To them belongs the honor of this descent, and to them I trust may be due the credit of rescuing it from oblivion.

In my experience in tracing the lines of descent, I have found that in all that constitute worth, intelligence, and honorable position, won by labor and merit, the balance will be in the line of the female descendants. We cannot have all this eliminated from our record. But I hear all around me the more pressing inquiry, shaping itself into asking: "Have you nothing but dry statistics of the dates of births, marriages, and deaths to give us?" "Tell us what the many members of the family did during the two centuries which have elapsed from the landing of Zachary on these shores. What great enterprises in Church and State did they project, and lead to successful completion? Who among them were the learned ministers and councillors of the land?"

Who were the warriors along the flaming lines of battle that rescued the land from peril? Who were the orators, surcharged with eloquence, and swaying the deepest emotions of the mind, as the forest bows before the rushing storm." History records none of our name in the catalogue she has written. The lives of the members of our family can be seen only between the lines of history. And it is only as the history of New England takes loftier attitude in the receding march of time that we can begin to measure the character and importance of their work and lives. They were among the humbler toilers in the fields, and builders in the towns and cities, heeding the command, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

John Bicknell was a carpenter, a man in constant requisition in a new settlement, so soon as saw-mills began to convert the forests into lumber, and the more commodious dwelling house to take the place of the primitive log hut. He was quite an extensive land-holder, as his will and the early possessions of his sons show. His was the task, with his companion immigrants, to wrestle with the problem confronting our first parents as they left the Garden of Eden. Around them, these hill-tops, valleys, and plains were covered with the forest-growth of centuries, and out of their subdual must come the provision for all their necessities for food, shelter, and raiment. How well they worked their problem to solution the comfortable condition of these early immigrants at the close of the first generation bears testimony. Amid all these pressing necessities they took upon themselves provision for the sustenance of the minister, and such provision for instruction of children as their means afforded. They had little time for the amenities of literature, and the minister was generally the only well-educated person in the community, often combining in his duties the four-fold work of minister, physician, lawyer and school-master.

John Bicknell's sons were brought up in habits of industry; his two older sons being husbandmen, and the younger son, Thomas, a blacksmith. So effectually had the work of subduing the wilderness of old Weymouth been accomplished, that Zachariah and Thomas, intrusting the task of perpetuating the Bicknell name in the old town to their older brother, John, struck out into new fields of labor, selling their estate of inheritance; a portion of the same going to Stephen French and others in trust for a parsonage.

Of the eight daughters of John Bicknell,<sup>2</sup> we have the fact that three were married, and bore the respective names of Dyer, Richards, and Trufant. It would be of exceeding interest, would those now bearing these names, in these several lines of descent, prepare a correct account of the same. Of the other five daughters we know nothing, and for them the records seem to be silent. And now in the male line,

the Bicknell history becomes dissevered, — John<sup>3</sup> remaining in Weymouth, Zachariah<sup>3</sup> going to Barrington, R. I., and Thomas<sup>3</sup> to Middleborough in Plymouth county.

John<sup>3</sup> attained the venerable age of 83 years, and at his death he left quite a large estate, as his will and inventory will show.

Of Zachariah<sup>3</sup> and what he accomplished in his new home, I am not so well advised, but know that he maintained a respectable and honorable position in the community, and so interested himself in the welfare of the people as to give out of his estate a lot of land for the site of a meeting-house.

Thomas<sup>3</sup> died at the age of 47 years, leaving a respectable estate for the times, and four orphan children, one son Japhet,<sup>4</sup> and three daughters. The mother dying a few years after, these children were then doubly orphaned.

The death of these three brothers closed the first century from the immigration of Zachary, and so had they and their fathers wrought and impressed themselves upon their descendants, that there went out from these lines into the world of work, for the next century, a swarm of laborers in the field, and builders and workers in the cities.

John<sup>4</sup> was a cordwainer. He went to Abington, and in the foundation of the prosperity of that town, in its peculiar line of work, we shall expect to find John Bicknell's lap-stone. His family record, however is open to the criticism which the ladies have passed upon our former record. His children were all boys, three of them, John, Joseph, and Nathaniel. This record is, however, rectified in the families of these three sons by the advent of a number of girls. It would be impossible to indicate here the descendants from these sons. The woods of Maine were once full of them, and having subdued these woods, the younger generations have come back into Massachusetts, to show us how a constant migration of a race, with the attendants of enterprise and industry, can improve and elevate it.

Zachariah<sup>4</sup> remained in Weymouth, and was a weaver by trade, and from him and his brother Benjamin<sup>4</sup> have descended those bearing the name now resident in Weymouth and its vicinity.

Benjamin<sup>4</sup> was twice married, and left only one son. His three daughters married, respectively, Dyer, Pratt, and Burrell.

Zachariah,<sup>3</sup> as we have seen, finding the limits of Weymouth too narrow for the family gathering around him, sought ampler room and opportunities on the shores of the Narragansett Bay. These quarters, however, soon proving insufficient for the enterprise of his sons, they soon reached out for larger opportunities, and found an untried wilderness in the northeastern part of the land of steady habits, where Zachariah<sup>4</sup> and his wife Katherine so improve these opportunities that they

saw gathered around them fourteen children, equally divided as to boys and girls,—stalwart boys and industrious girls,—helpers in converting the forests into fruitful fields, and in consuming the fruits of industrious labor. From this nest, so prolific, went out the earlier settlers of New Hampshire and Vermont, ever seeking new contests with uncultivated nature, and rejoicing in new and constant victories gained over the same.

Japhet,<sup>4</sup> left doubly orphaned by the early death of father and mother, gaining lessons of self-reliance by the pressure of stern necessity, goes into the world of traffic near the borders of Rhode Island, and with such success that his descendants have become our successful manufacturers and merchants, making the name known and felt in the communities where they lived, and in these later years taking position among the distinguished of the land in the learned professions and in halls of legislation.

You will see by this brief résumé that our fathers, in the first two centuries had too much to do of important work to take much concern of such trifling matters as literature and science. In fact, so far as I can gather from recollection and tradition they were inclined to regard any tendency in this direction as indicating an infirmity of mind and purpose. I would not have you infer that they were not educated, but it was the education wrought out in the field of thought amid their hard daily labor. They could all read the Bible, and understand the doctrinal distinctions drawn from its interpretation, and from what we know of them, they governed their lives by its precepts. A distinguished judge once said in the trial of a case, when the reputation of a witness was called in question,—to the answer to the question, What did you ever hear said about the reputation of the witness? “I never heard anything said about it,”—that “this was the very best reputation that could be had.” We at least can boast of all the virtues of this negative reputation, so far as history is concerned with our ancestors.

But since the close of the second century, some departures have been made from the line of work that the fathers had so tenaciously clung to. I think they crept in by very small beginnings. When some of the boys gave indication of a want of physical robustness, sufficient to follow the fathers in their hard lines of labor and enterprise, they gave them a few more weeks of schooling, in hopes, if they could do no better, they might, perchance, make a schoolmaster or a minister out of the unpromising material, and thus lessen the burden of their support upon their abler brothers. I never could find that they thought much of mere book-learning. The question with them was not “What does he know?” but “What can he do?” I call to mind one of those sturdy old patriarchs, when he had occasion to prepare some notices of an



auktion,—this was before printing-presses were common,—who commenced the word “Public” with a large and well-executed capital “B,” having evidently the elder Weller’s fondness for the family initial.

Could we have kept the wandering emigrants around and near the old hearthstone, I doubt not we might have stayed the conversion of so many good farmers and mechanics into ministers, lawyers, doctors, school-masters, merchants, manufacturers, legislators, and poets, who have come back to us from the woods of Maine, the mountains of Vermont, the lakes of New York, the great plains of the West, and even from that little State of Rhode Island where there was not room enough for them to swing their growing ambition around in, to stir us up in wonder at their learning and accomplishments, their sagacity and their enterprise. But that is not the worst of it. Instead of relegating them again to the work of the fathers, we are beginning to take pride in them. We are talking of the power they exert in our Christian churches by their spoken word and consistent lives. • We are asking the lawyers to help us manage our weighty and intricate affairs, and if specially gifted, asking them to speak to and for us, on high and solemn occasions. And when infirmity and pain come to us, how gladly we hail the doctor, if, peradventure, we may haply find one of our name or lineage. For our school-masters, do we not denude our fields of their most precious and hard-won crops, to buy the piles of books our children are hardly able to carry to school, and stand mute and wondering where heads can be found to carry all they know? And when duty calls one of them to the very front in educational labor, how exultingly we gaze upon the wide swath he carries through the ripe and heavy harvest of his work. Do not our very trowels beat music to the manufacturer’s call for large and magnificent buildings, and our crops find ready purchasers from the hands of our merchants? And we almost bow down to the grandeur of their success, forgetting that from our contributory streams all this affluence flows.

And what shall we say for our poets?

“Taint every man can be a poet,  
No more than a sheep can be a go-at.”

I have wondered how this element of power and beauty got into the work of our family. I know that poetry is allied to music, and all the Bicknells are musical. They have been leaders and teachers of it. They can all sing. I have somewhere a dim hint of a tradition of one of those old leaders of a progressive tendency who liked to keep poetic expression in harmony with musical surroundings. He tried his good minister. I believe it is somewhere incident to the work of the ministry



to be tried and vexed by choirs and choristers. Well, this leader had often brought his emendations to his minister for his sanction, but did not get much encouragement. On one occasion he brought the following lines from Watts :

“Oh! may my heart in tune be found,  
Like David's harp of solemn sound,”

with the suggestion that, as harps were obsolete instruments in a musical choir, the lines might be changed and brought more into harmony with existing instruments, and handed the minister the following :

“Oh! may my heart be tuned within,  
Like David's sacred violin.”

The good minister was aghast at the sacrilege, as he thought it, but finally told his respected chorister that he thought he could improve that. So he wrote the following :

“Oh! may my heart go diddle, diddle,  
Like Uncle David's sacred fiddle.”

Suffice it to say, our leader got small encouragement for his efforts. Now, would any one, from such discouraging beginnings, undertake to write a policy of insurance for success? And yet success in our family has come in through the insurance department, and at least one of the worthy presidents of those invaluable institutions will fire up at any suggestions as to the value of the policies he can issue.

But right here, I know I shall offend no one when I again assert that the highest attainments come in where there are girls in the family. Have we not the sweetest of all songs ever written for a family gathering? I hear, as I meet the various members of the family who were not with us when it was read, expressions of the liveliest pleasure and the greatest satisfaction, which they have derived from its perusal. It is the rhythmic chant of all the ages, from old Zachary's embarkation, heard in the waves dashing upon his ocean-bound bark, taken up on the forest hills of Weymouth and carried in sweeping accents all through the migrations of the generations, and at last finding its appropriate expression and voice through a daughter of our household.

And now, Mr. President, permit me to close by reading a few lines written by one of Bicknell descent, who is forbidden by our customs to give voice to it on occasions like this :

## P O E M .

WRITTEN BY MRS. H. A. FLETCHER, OF HINGHAM.

In the sweet beauty of this autumn day  
We gather, as before,  
And friends and brothers meet again,  
And hands are clasped once more.

We come from hill, from dale, from shore,  
From many a distant plain,  
Glad to obey the call to greet  
The dear old home again.

No strangers' faces here we see ;  
All, all are kindred here ;  
The tie that binds us is the same,—  
The name we all hold dear.

The name they bore, whose lives we trace  
Back through the far-off years,  
Whose hearts were filled with courage true,  
Who knew no idle fears.

They left their home beyond the seas,  
Trusting in Heaven's own care,  
And planted here the goodly seed  
That fruitage rich now bears.

Their annals show no lofty deeds ;  
They humbly tilled the sod,  
And bravely toiling, loved their homes,  
Their country, and their God.

Tomorrow's sun shall see unveiled  
Our tribute to their praise,  
Whose years were filled with earnest deeds,  
And steadfast all their ways.

What is the lesson of this day,  
So bright with autumn flowers ?  
What lesson should we teach again  
By every deed of ours ?

That vain is wealth, and fleeting fame,  
And pride of lofty birth ;  
Better by far, a thousand times,  
The pride of honest worth.

Then let us to our good old name  
Our highest homage render ;  
May all our youths be strong and brave,  
Our maidens, true and tender.

May peace and plenty crown our day,  
May no harsh discords sever ;  
And while the future years roll on,  
The *Bicknells* live forever.

### A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF EZRA BICKNELL, OF HINGHAM.

Since our last meeting the angel of death with his spreading wing has cast a shadow upon some of our households. I know not how many have passed under this shadow. One whom I have known all my life has since that time closed his earth-work, and entered into his rest. Ezra Bicknell, of Hingham, died last June. He was my cousin, and I know of no one who, in life and character, could stand so conspicuously and could so completely represent the ideal I have formed of the worth and virtues of the earlier generations.

His was a life of indomitable and persevering industry, with large ability in execution. In character he was a model of integrity, whose word was as good as his bond. He was open and outspoken in his opinions, but never disputatious, carrying the largest charity for all differences. In heart and feeling, his was the tenderness of an infant, quick to respond to all demands for labors of love and service to his neighbors. In his family circle, a model husband and father, filling his household with the tenderest ministrations of love and duty. And when infirmity and sickness came in his old age, and years of pain preceded his departure, he reaped largely in those ministrations of tenderest care, from wife and children which a life so rich in love and duty had sown. In the support of all our valuable institutions, religious and charitable, his gifts always equaled his ability, and he was always ready with hands and heart to sustain them. He was some years my senior, and I early learned to love and esteem him.

With such records as this may the annals of our family be filled, more enduring than those of brass and stone.



# CONTRIBUTORS

TO THE

## BICKNELL MONUMENT.

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Thomas W. Bicknell,  
Amelia D. Bicknell,  
Maria A. St. John,  
Mary Ida St. John,  
David A. Waldron,  
Mary J. Waldron,  
Lewis B. Smith,  
Judith R. Smith,  
Chester C. Bicknell,  
Mary L. Bicknell,  
James Bicknell,  
Olive H. Cooper,  
Henry A. Bicknell,  
Christina Lowney,  
Lucy Mitchell,  
Harriet Bicknell Smith,  
W. M. Bicknell,  
Lovell Bicknell Bates,  
Luke B. Noyes,  
Mrs. Rev. Charles Oldfield.  
Elra Bicknell,  
Orlana E. Smith.  
Otis P. Bicknell,  
Alden Bicknell,  
Lilleyous B. Campbell,  
Nancy W. Gould,  
Sabrina Bicknell Cowing.  
Anna G. Bates,  
Nabby B. Pratt,  
E. Bicknell.  
Joseph I. Bicknell,  
Nancy B. Holbrook,  
Almira Holbrook,  
Benjamin Pratt,  
Eliza Pratt,  
Ezra A. Knapp,  
Martha Bicknell Knapp,  
Stephen G. Bicknell,  
Sarah W. S. Bicknell,  
Alice Bicknell,

Arthur E. Bicknell,  
Ann Eliza Tirrell Bates,  
Nathaniel Noyes,  
Laura T. Bicknell,  
C. T. Bicknell,  
Lydia A. Nickerson,  
Ezra L. Bicknell,  
Edwin Bicknell,  
M. W. Bicknell,  
Liberty Burnett,  
Merrill Bicknell Burnett.  
Mary A. Lincoln.  
Mrs. Charles P. Bicknell,  
T. John Evans,  
Clara Bicknell Walker,  
Francis B. Bates,  
Alpheus Bates,  
Jotham Salisbury,  
Harriet N. B. Goodspeed,  
Mrs. Theodore Blanchard,  
Fletcher G. Blanchard,  
David Bicknell,  
Otis G. Harris,  
Edward J. Bicknell,  
Eleanor P. Bicknell,  
Edward Bicknell,  
Frank J. Bicknell,  
Eliza E. Bicknell,  
James W. Bicknell,  
Rosilla Marden,  
William E. Noyes,  
Emily R. Bicknell,  
Harrison Bicknell,  
Melinda Lyons,  
Otis C. Blanchard,  
Harrison C. Bicknell,  
Ellery Bicknell Crane,  
John F. Bicknell,  
Frank M. Bicknell,  
Rosella J. Bicknell,

Joseph Bicknell,  
 James Bicknell,  
 James Eddy Mauran,  
 George F. Bicknell,  
 Amos P. Bates,  
 William Bicknell,  
 Mrs. Waldo C. French,  
 Mary J. Merchant,  
 Nellie A. Bicknell,  
 Mary Thaolin Bicknell,  
 Thomas M. Bicknell,  
 Mrs. E. A. B. Carpenter,  
 Francis A. Bicknell,  
 George A. Bicknell,  
 Dana Bicknell,  
 Emma Bicknell,  
 J. Bennett Bicknell,  
 J. E. Bicknell,  
 Mrs. J. B. Seymour,  
 Mrs. N. J. Brown,  
 Walter F. Bicknell,  
 Sallie B. Thomas,  
 B. F. Shaw,  
 Mrs. B. F. Shaw,  
 Eliel Bates,  
 Dr. L. C. Bicknell,  
 Elizabeth Bicknell,  
 Fred A. Bicknell,  
 Ella A. Bicknell,  
 Thomas Lincoln,  
 Zechariah L. Bicknell,  
 Jacob N. L. Bicknell,  
 Robert T. Bicknell,  
 Joseph G. Bicknell,  
 Joseph L. Bicknell,  
 William A. Blossom,  
 Marinda D. Bicknell,  
 Ruth L. Harrington,  
 Mary L. Miles,  
 Mrs. Clarendon Bowles,  
 Thomas Bicknell,  
 Henry T. Bicknell,  
 Mrs. Ephraim Bicknell,  
 Henry F. Bicknell,  
 Lucy A. Payne,  
 Joseph L. Newton,  
 Sabrina Newton,

Edward B. Newton,  
 Susie O. Dean,  
 James Q. B. Goodspeed,  
 Joshua Bicknell,  
 Walter J. Bicknell,  
 Alice Bicknell,  
 Mrs. H. M. DeLarmoyer,  
 George H. Bicknell,  
 Joseph P. Bicknell,  
 George F. Bicknell,  
 George Bicknell,  
 A. E. Macdonald,  
 Olive B. Hayford,  
 Laura McDonald,  
 Alfred Bicknell,  
 Mrs. Alfred Bicknell,  
 William E. Bicknell,  
 Emery O. Bicknell,  
 Henry S. Bicknell,  
 J. Edward Bicknell,  
 Clara E. Bicknell French,  
 Alexis Torrey,  
 Annie L. Newton,  
 Lot W. Bicknell,  
 John W. Bates,  
 Mrs. J. A. Cline,  
 Freeborn Bicknell,  
 Augustus M. Bicknell,  
 Lemuel Torrey,  
 Mrs. W. H. White,  
 Albion H. Bicknell,  
 Rev. E. A. Wyman,  
 Charles Henry Pratt,  
 William H. Pratt,  
 Amos J. Bicknell,  
 Susan Bicknell Fisher,  
 Rebecca C. Poor,  
 Mrs. Charles H. Davis,  
 Mrs. Warren Dyer,  
 Mrs. Hiram Blanchard,  
 Virgil D. Bicknell,  
 Lincoln B. Bicknell,  
 Quincy Bicknell,  
 Albert P. Bicknell,  
 Sabrina Bicknell W. Townsend,  
 Mary J. Benson.













